



BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

Annual Report

ON THE

HEALTH OF BEDFORD

FOR THE YEAR

1953

BY

G. K. BOWES, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

together with the Report of

F. C. HAYNES, Cert.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR




BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1953



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CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| PREFACE | 5 |
| PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE | 6 |
| PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF | 6 |
| I. VITAL STATISTICS | 7 |
| 1. SUMMARY OF STATISTICS | |
| 2. VITAL STATISTICS. Bedford and England and Wales compared | |
| 3. POPULATION | |
| 4. BIRTH RATE | |
| 5. STILL BIRTHS | |
| 6. DEATH RATE | |
| 7. CAUSES OF DEATH | |
| 8. MATERNAL MORTALITY | |
| 9. INFANT MORTALITY | |
| II. SOCIAL CONDITIONS | 17 |
| III. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA | 18 |
| 1. GENERAL | |
| 2. WATER SUPPLY | |
| (a) <i>Quantity and Quality</i> | |
| (b) <i>Untreated Raw Water</i> | |
| (c) <i>Supply to Dwelling Houses</i> | |
| (d) <i>Swimming Baths and Paddling Pool</i> | |
| IV. HOUSING | 21 |
| 1. GENERAL | |
| 2. NEW HOUSES | |
| 3. HOUSING REQUIREMENTS | |
| V. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD | 24 |
| 1. MILK | |
| (a) <i>Dairies and Distributors</i> | |
| (b) <i>Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949</i> | |
| <i>Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised</i> | |
| <i>Milk) Regulations, 1949</i> | |
| 2. MEAT | |
| 3. OTHER FOODS | |
| 4. ICE CREAM | |
| 5. ADULTERATION OF FOODS | |
| 6. SLAUGHTER HOUSES | |
| 7. SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT, 1933 | |
| 8. LIQUID EGG | |

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| VI. PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES | 30 |
| 1. INFECTIOUS DISEASES, OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS | |
| (a) <i>General Statistics</i> | |
| (b) <i>Individual Diseases</i> | |
| 2. TUBERCULOSIS | |
| 3. SCABIES AND VERMINOUS INFESTATION | |
| (a) <i>General</i> | |
| (b) <i>Scabies</i> | |
| (c) <i>Verminous Infestation</i> | |
| VII. MISCELLANEOUS | 37 |
| (a) <i>Care of the Aged</i> | |
| (b) <i>Mortuary</i> | |
| (c) <i>Domestic Baths</i> | |
| VIII. CONCLUSION | 38 |

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
TOWN HALL,
BEDFORD.

June, 1954.

TO HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR,
ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS OF THE
BOROUGH OF BEDFORD.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for 1953.

Perhaps the surprisingly low death rate calls for comment. This occurred in spite of the prevalence of influenza and a number of deaths due directly or indirectly to this cause in the early part of the year. Since the deaths from a number of the diseases of old age show a decline, perhaps the year may have been specially favourable to the aged. Apart from influenza no special cause of death or morbidity calls for comment.

I have to express my thanks to the members of the Town Council, especially of the Public Health Committee, for their uniform help and consideration for the work of the department; my thanks also to those concerned, for the loyal co-operation of the staff of the Public Health Department, and for assistance received in many ways from the Town Clerk and officials of other departments of the Corporation.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

G. K. BOWES,

Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

(31st December, 1953)

ALDERMAN L. H. NICHOLSON, *Chairman*
COUNCILLOR A. R. SHARP, *Vice-Chairman*
ALDERMAN C. A. E. C. HOWARD, J.P. (*The Mayor*)
COUNCILLOR G. R. BAILEY
COUNCILLOR G. O. JONES
COUNCILLOR MRS. C. M. METZ
COUNCILLOR A. H. RANDALL
COUNCILLOR MRS. M. ROGERS
COUNCILLOR L. E. T. SALSURY
COUNCILLOR L. WALLACE

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health

G. K. BOWES, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health

F. A. WILLIAMS, M.B., B.S.(Lond.), M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.(Vict.)

Chief Sanitary Inspector

F. C. HAYNES, Cert. R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Deputy Chief Sanitary Inspector and Chief Inspector, Meat and Other Foods

J. F. WILKINSON, M.R.San.I., Cert. Meat Inspection R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Sanitary Inspectors

E. J. CONSTABLE, A.R.San.I., Cert. Meat Inspection R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

D. P. J. BYRNE, A.R.San.I., Cert. Meat Inspection R.San.I., M.S.I.A.
(Commenced 1.5.1953)

F. W. GOLDSMITH, A.R.San.I., Cert. Meat Inspection R.San.I., M.S.I.A.
(Resigned 31.8.1953)

D. R. McCULLOCH, A.R.San.I., Cert. Meat Inspection R.San.I., M.S.I.A.
(Commenced 1.11.1953)

Chief Clerk

F. J. DIX

Clerks

P. G. ALLSTON

R. F. RAWLINS (resigned 31.5.1953)

D. G. AYRES

MISS A. N. WARREN

*Disinfectors, Drain Testers, Rodent Destruction Operators,
and Mortuary Attendants*

G. V. BURRIDGE (Retired 27.10.1953)

F. WOOTTON

H. W. COMMINS

J. M. MUNDAY

BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health

G. K. BOWES, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H.

1. VITAL STATISTICS

1. Summary of Statistics

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|
| Area of Borough (in acres) | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4,972 |
| Population— | | | | | | |
| Census 1951 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 53,065 |
| Registrar-General's Estimated Home Population for 1953 | | | | | | 54,770 |
| Number of Inhabited Houses— | | | | | | |
| According to rate books (31st December, 1953) | ... | | | | ... | 15,995 |
| Number of Separate Households— | | | | | | |
| Census 1951, based on 1% sample | | | ... | ... | ... | 16,200 |
| Rateable Value (31st December, 1953) | | | ... | ... | ... | £422,718 |
| Yield of One Penny Rate (1953–1954) | ... | | ... | ... | ... | £1,700 |

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR, 1953

| | | | | Total | Male | Female | Rate per 1,000 population |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Live Births— | | | | | | | |
| Legitimate | ... | ... | | 804 | 416 | 388 | |
| Illegitimate | ... | ... | | 44 | 25 | 19 | |
| | | | | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | |
| Total | ... | ... | ... | 848 | 441 | 407 | Birth Rate 15·5 |
| | | | | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | |
| Stillbirths— | | | | | | | |
| Legitimate | ... | ... | | 17 | 12 | 5 | |
| Illegitimate | ... | ... | | — | — | — | |
| | | | | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | |
| Total | ... | ... | ... | 17 | 12 | 5 | Rate 0·31 |
| | | | | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | |
| Deaths | ... | ... | ... | 480 | 233 | 247 | Death Rate— Uncorrected 8·8 Corrected 8·2 |
| Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age— | | | | | | | Rate per 1,000 live births |
| Legitimate | ... | ... | | 18 | 8 | 10 | |
| Illegitimate | ... | ... | | 1 | 1 | — | |
| | | | | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | |
| Total | ... | ... | ... | 19 | 9 | 10 | Rate 23·6 |
| | | | | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | |

| Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age— | | | | | | Rate per 1,000 live births |
|---|-----|-----|-------|-------|--------|-------------------------------|
| | | | Total | Male | Female | |
| Legitimate | ... | ... | 11 | 7 | 4 | |
| Illegitimate | ... | ... | — | — | — | |
| | | | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> | |
| Total | ... | ... | 11 | 7 | 4 | Rate 13·0 |
| | | | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> | |

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth—

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|---|---|
| From sepsis | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | } | — |
| Other causes | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | | |

2. Vital Statistics, Bedford and England and Wales Compared

| | Bedford | England and Wales | 160 County Boroughs and Great Towns (including London) |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| BIRTHS— | Rates per 1,000 Home | | Population |
| Live births | 15·5 | 15·5 | 17·0 |
| Still births | { 0·31 | 0·35 | 0·43 |
| | { 19·7 (a) | 22·4 (a) | 24·8 (a) |
| DEATHS— | | | |
| All causes | 8·2 | 11·4 | 12·2 |
| Typhoid and paratyphoid | — | 0·00 | 0·00 |
| Whooping cough | 0·02 | 0·01 | 0·01 |
| Diphtheria | — | 0·00 | 0·00 |
| Tuberculosis | 0·15 | 0·20 | 0·24 |
| Influenza | 0·22 | 0·16 | 0·15 |
| Smallpox | — | 0·00 | 0·00 |
| Acute poliomyelitis (including polio- encephalitis) | — | 0·01 | 0·01 |
| Pneumonia | 0·38 | 0·55 | 0·54 |
| NOTIFICATIONS (corrected)— | | | |
| Typhoid fever | — | 0·00 | 0·00 |
| Paratyphoid fever | — | 0·01 | 0·01 |
| Meningococcal infections | 0·01 | 0·03 | 0·04 |
| Scarlet fever | 2·30 | 1·39 | 1·50 |
| Whooping cough | 6·17 | 3·58 | 3·72 |
| Diphtheria | — | 0·01 | 0·01 |
| Erysipelas | 0·09 | 0·14 | 0·14 |
| Smallpox | — | 0·00 | 0·00 |
| Measles | 31·10 | 12·36 | 11·27 |
| Pneumonia | 2·04 | 0·84 | 0·92 |
| Acute poliomyelitis (including polio- encephalitis)— | | | |
| Paralytic | — | 0·07 | 0·06 |
| Non-Paralytic | 0·05 | 0·54 | 0·03 |
| Food poisoning | 0·16 | 0·24 | 0·25 |
| Puerperal pyrexia | 48·6 (a) | 18·23 (a) | 24·33 (a) |
| DEATHS— | Rates per | 1,000 Live | Births |
| All Causes under 1 year of age | — | 26·8 (b) | 30·8 (b) |
| Enteritis and diarrhoea under 2 years of age | — | 1·1 | 1·3 |

(a) Per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births.

(b) Per 1,000 *related* live births.

MATERNAL MORTALITY IN ENGLAND AND WALES

| Immediate List No. and cause | Number of Deaths | | Rates per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births | | Rates per million women aged 15-44. England and Wales |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| | Bedford | England and Wales | Bedford | England and Wales | |
| A115 Sepsis of pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium ... | — | 68 | — | 0·10 | |
| A116 { Abortion with toxaemia ... Other toxaemias of pregnancy and the puerperium | — | 7 | — | 0·01 | 1 |
| | — | 166 | — | 0·24 | |
| A117 Haemorrhage of pregnancy and childbirth ... | — | 90 | — | 0·13 | |
| A118 Abortion without mention of sepsis or toxaemia ... | — | 30 | — | 0·04 | 3 |
| A119 Abortion with sepsis ... | — | 39 | — | 0·06 | 4 |
| A120 Other complications of pregnancy, child- birth and the puerperium ... | — | 125 | — | 0·18 | |

3. Population.

The normally resident population as given by the Registrar-General was 54,770, an increase of 370 on the figure for the previous year. This number is practically identical with that of the natural increase, or excess of births over deaths, of 368.

The following table shows the population changes since 1948. In 1950 the Registrar-General began to replace estimates for "civilian population" by estimates for "home population", the latter figure including the armed forces stationed in the area. This change in method has made no difference to the Borough of Bedford.

POPULATION 1948-1953

| Year | Population | Increase over previous year | Natural Increase | Difference due to excess of immigration over emigration |
|---|------------|-----------------------------|------------------|---|
| 1948 | 52,810 | | | |
| 1949 | 52,990 | 180 | 187 | - 7 |
| 1950 | 53,770 | 780 | 216 | 514 |
| 1951 | 54,120 | 350 | 218 | 132 |
| 1952 | 54,400 | 280 | 207 | 73 |
| 1953 | 54,770 | 370 | 368 | 2 |
| Total increase 1948-1953 | | 1,960 | 1,196 | 714 |
| Average yearly increase in 5 years | | 392 | 239 | 143 |

It will be seen that in the past five years there has been an increase of nearly 2,000 in the population. A good deal more than half of this increase, namely 1,196, is due to natural increase, while the remainder, 714, is due to excess of immigration over emigration. One factor tending to increase the population is the number of foreigners who have within recent years come to live in Bedford, the males being employed largely in the heavy industries in the town and its neighbourhood. From the available information it appears that this number is now approaching 2,000, and under present social and economic conditions it looks as if the number might be expected to increase.

4. Birth Rate

The birth rate during the year was 15·5, a figure identical with that of the country as a whole. In the previous year, 1952, the corresponding figures for Bedford and for England and Wales were 15·1 and 15·3. Since 1950 there has been little change in the birth rate in Bedford or over the whole country. The slight increase which has taken place in Bedford between 1952 and 1953 may be in part due to the immigration of a foreign population among which a birth rate higher than in this country is still customary; and in fact an appreciable number of the women of these foreign nationals are found on arrival to be pregnant. To judge from surnames, admittedly a not quite accurate method of judging, it appears that a total of 50 births has taken place among the foreign population, a number which indicates a higher birth rate than among the population generally.

The illegitimate birth rate in Bedford has declined from 1·2 per thousand in 1952 to 0·8 in 1953, which may be compared with the figure of 0·7 for England and Wales. In fact it appears that, apart from minor fluctuations, the rate for illegitimate births, after a considerable rise during the war period and just after, has now settled down to the rate usual before the war.

The Registrar-General is able to show by statistics that the number of births for the last few years in the country generally has been just enough to maintain the population in equilibrium when a view extending over a

generation is taken. This is of course true from the point of view of numbers only, for when it is realised that a much smaller proportion of births is now taking place among stocks better endowed with hereditary intelligence and vigour, and the greatest proportion among the poorest stocks, including at the very lowest end of the scale the "problem families", then it is seen that the number of births is quite inadequate to secure qualitative replacement. The conclusion seems inescapable that a progressive racial deterioration must be taking place.

Moreover, the reading of history shows that when a society arrives at such a point in its development that it is no longer in fashion for women to bear, or for men to beget, children, then the inevitable end of that society and a return before long to a new dark age is in sight. The Roman legislator, who saw the approaching decline of the empire in the failure of the higher orders of the state to rear families, tried by law to make it practically compulsory for members of the senatorial order, among whom celibacy had become fashionable, to marry and have children. Of course such legislation was entirely without effect and was directed to the male half of the population only. If in old Rome the advancement of women and gynaecocracy had progressed so far as in present day Europe, and if the Roman law maker had been faced with the problem of laying upon female senators and ministers of state the universal obligation of marriage and the rearing of families, then even he would probably have shrunk from the attempt.

5. Still Births

The still birth rate for Bedford was 0.31 per 1,000 population which may be compared with 0.33 for England and Wales. The corresponding rates for 1,000 total live and still births were 19.7 and 22.4 respectively. In order to eliminate chance fluctuations the figures over a period of five years are given in the following table, from which it appears that the figures compare well with those for the country as a whole.

STILL BIRTH RATES
Bedford and England and Wales 1949-1953

| Year | Per 1,000 population | | Per 1,000 total births (live and still) | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--|----------------------|
| | Bedford | England and Wales | Bedford | England and Wales |
| 1949 | 0.26 | 0.39 | 17.2 | 22.7 |
| 1950 | 0.46 | 0.37 | 29.1 | 22.6 |
| 1951 | 0.22 | 0.36 | 14.1 | 23.0 |
| 1952 | 0.39 | 0.33 | 25.0 | 22.6 |
| 1953 | 0.31 | 0.35 | 19.7 | 22.4 |
| Average 1949-1953 | 0.33 | 0.36 | 21.0 | 22.7 |

6. Death Rate

The uncorrected death rate was 8·8, as compared with 11·3 for the previous year. After correction by multiplying by the Registrar-General's comparability figure of 0·94 to make allowances for age and sex constitution, a figure of 8·2 is obtained, which may be compared with 11·4, the figure for England and Wales. Last year's death rate for Bedford is surprisingly low, and considerably below that for the country as a whole. In a comparatively small population the total death rate as well as deaths from individual causes must be largely influenced by chance fluctuations, and it can hardly be expected that so low a death rate will be maintained in future years.

The death rate has now reached such a point that any large permanent further reduction is no longer possible, and in fact on account of the increase in average age of the population an increase of the death rate in the near future is to be expected. A low death rate is taken as an index of the health of the community. It should not, however, be taken as meaning more than that among the sum total of individuals "preventible" diseases are being prevented and death is being postponed till it occurs inevitably, perhaps after prolonged "medicated survival", from the degenerative processes of old age. From the point of view of society as a whole the combination of a low death rate with a low birth rate and a population approaching numerical stability means that children are being replaced by the aged, the young and vigorous by the senile and decrepit, a state of affairs which indicates anything but a healthy state of society as a whole.

7. Causes of Death

| Cause of Death | | | | | Males | Females |
|-------------------|---|-----|-----|-----|-------|---------|
| ALL CAUSES | | | | | 233 | 247 |
| 1. | Tuberculosis, respiratory | ... | ... | ... | 8 | — |
| 2. | Tuberculosis, other | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 3. | Syphilitic diseases | ... | ... | ... | 1 | — |
| 4. | Diphtheria | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 5. | Whooping Cough | ... | ... | ... | — | 1 |
| 6. | Meningococcal infections | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 7. | Acute Poliomyelitis | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 8. | Measles | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| 9. | Other infective and parasitic diseases | ... | ... | ... | 1 | 1 |
| 10. | Malignant neoplasm, stomach | ... | ... | ... | — | 3 |
| 11. | Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus | ... | ... | ... | 14 | 4 |
| 12. | Malignant neoplasm, breast | ... | ... | ... | — | 5 |
| 13. | Malignant neoplasm, uterus | ... | ... | ... | — | 6 |
| 14. | Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms | ... | ... | ... | 29 | 25 |
| 15. | Leukaemia, aleukaemia | ... | ... | ... | 1 | 1 |
| 16. | Diabetes | ... | ... | ... | — | 2 |
| 17. | Vascular lesions of nervous systems | ... | ... | ... | 21 | 41 |
| 18. | Coronary diseases, angina | ... | ... | ... | 40 | 22 |
| 19. | Hypertension, with heart disease | ... | ... | ... | 5 | 9 |
| 20. | Other heart diseases | ... | ... | ... | 28 | 43 |

CAUSES OF DEATH (continued)—

| Cause of Death | Males | Females |
|---|-------|---------|
| 21. Other circulatory disease | 12 | 17 |
| 22. Influenza | 6 | 6 |
| 23. Pneumonia | 12 | 9 |
| 24. Bronchitis | 10 | 13 |
| 25. Other diseases of respiratory system | 2 | 2 |
| 26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum | 4 | 1 |
| 27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea | — | 2 |
| 28. Nephritis and nephrosis | 2 | 3 |
| 29. Hyperplasia of prostate | 6 | — |
| 30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion | — | — |
| 31. Congenital malformations | 2 | 1 |
| 32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases | 20 | 21 |
| 33. Motor vehicle accidents | 4 | — |
| 34. All other accidents | 1 | 6 |
| 35. Suicide | 4 | 3 |
| 36. Homicide and operations of war | — | — |

A few comments may be made on individual causes of deaths. Tuberculosis (numbered 1 and 2 in the list) in all its forms caused 8 deaths only in comparison with 9 in the previous year. Tuberculosis as a cause of mortality is declining. No deaths were caused by diphtheria (4), meningococcal infections (6), acute poliomyelitis (7) or measles (8). One death was due to whooping cough (5). Cancer and allied conditions (10–14) caused 86 deaths in comparison with 106 in 1952. Influenza (22) caused 12 deaths in contrast with none in 1952. Suicide (35) caused 7 deaths compared with 6 in 1952. Motor accidents (33) caused 4 deaths of Borough residents compared with 6 in 1952. None of these accidents occurred within the Borough boundary. Two fatal accidents involving non-residents occurred within the Borough. In addition one pedal cyclist, a resident, was killed by a fall from her bicycle in the Borough.

About half the total number of deaths occurred from those causes which in a general way may be said to represent the degenerative changes of old age; 62 deaths, compared with 88 in 1952, were caused by cerebral haemorrhage and similar causes (17); 176, compared with 227 in 1952, from diseases of the heart and arteries apart from cerebral haemorrhage (18–21).

Of the total reduction in the number of deaths in 1953 as compared with 1952, namely 132, 97 were due to a reduction in the combined figures for cancer and the diseases mentioned in the last paragraph, the remainder of the total reduction being distributed over the other diseases in the list. From the nature of the case it appears that the reduction in numbers between the two years must be due to chance or to temporary causes.

8. Maternal Mortality

No cases of deaths of mothers in child-birth occurred.

9. Infant Mortality

The total number of infant deaths was 19 of which 9 were male and 10 female, giving an infant mortality rate of 23·6 per 1,000 live births over the year, which may be compared with 26·8 per 1,000 related births, the figure for England and Wales.

The table for the past five years given below shows that the figures for Bedford compare well with those for the country.

| DEATH RATE PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|----------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Year</i> | | | <i>Bedford</i> | <i>England and Wales</i> |
| 1949 | ... | ... | 26·3 | 32·7 |
| 1950 | ... | ... | 32·4 | 29·8 |
| 1951 | ... | ... | 25·0 | 29·6 |
| 1952 | ... | ... | 19·5 | 27·6 |
| 1953 | ... | ... | 23·6 | 26·8 |
| Average 1949–1953 | | | 25·4 | 29·3 |

Immaturity or premature birth is an important cause of infantile mortality. The following list shows the ages at death of the 6 infants who died from this cause.

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-----|---|----------------|-----|---|------------------------|
| 6 hours | ... | 1 | } 0–24 hours | ... | 3 | } Under one year ... 6 |
| 7 hours | ... | 1 | | | | |
| 8 hours | ... | 1 | | | | |
| 1 day | ... | 1 | } Under 7 days | ... | 2 | |
| 2 days | ... | 1 | | | | |
| 7 months | ... | 1 | | | | |

The number of neo-natal deaths, or those occurring under one month, was 11, corresponding to a rate of 13 per 1,000 live births, which may be compared with 14·7, the figure for the previous year.

The following table shows the individual causes of deaths of infants under 1 year. The headings in the table are those in the latest annual report of the Ministry of Health.

INFANT MORTALITY BY AGE, SEX AND CAUSE

| Cause | Sex | Weeks | | | | Total under one month | Months | | | | Total under one year |
|--|-----|-------|----|----|----|-----------------------|--------|----|----|----|----------------------|
| | | 0- | 1- | 2- | 3- | | 1- | 3- | 6- | 9- | |
| Whooping Cough | M | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | F | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 |
| Tuberculosis | M | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | F | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Measles | M | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | F | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Convulsions | M | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | F | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Bronchitis and Pneumonia | M | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 |
| | F | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 3 |
| Gastro-Enteritis | M | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | F | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Congenital Malformations* | M | 2 | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| | F | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Immaturity (Associated immaturity) | M | 2 | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| | F | 3 | - | - | - | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | 4 |
| Injury at birth | M | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| | F | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Post-natal Asphyxia and Atelectasis | M | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| | F | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Haemolytic disease | M | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | F | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 |
| Accidental mechanical suffocation | M | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | F | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Other causes† | M | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| | F | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| All causes | M | 6 | 1 | - | - | 7 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 9 |
| | F | 3 | - | 1 | - | 4 | 4 | - | 1 | 1 | 10 |

*Congenital Malformations

| Case No. | Cause |
|----------|---|
| 1 | I. (a) Suparenal Haemorrhages. (b) Tentorial tear. (c) Prematurity. |
| | II. Multiple congenital deformities. |
| 2 | Intestinal obstruction, operation for removal of a membrane in the small bowel. Intra Pulmonary haemorrhage. |

†Other Causes

| Case No. | Cause |
|----------|--|
| 1 | I. (a) Suparenal failure due to (b) Suparenal haemorrhage due to (c) An acute infection of unknown identity. |

The following table shows the individual causes of deaths in infants under 4 weeks.

NEONATAL MORTALITY ACCORDING TO CERTIFIED CAUSES

| Cause | Weeks | | | | Total under one month |
|---|-------|----|----|----|-----------------------------|
| | 0- | 1- | 2- | 3- | |
| All infective and parasitic diseases ... | - | - | - | - | - |
| Bronchitis | - | 1 | 1 | - | 2 |
| Pneumonia | - | - | - | - | - |
| Diarrhoea of newborn | - | - | - | - | - |
| Immaturity | 5 | - | - | - | 5 |
| Congenital Malformations | 2 | - | - | - | 2 |
| Asphyxia and Atelectasis | 1 | - | - | - | 1 |
| Congenital debility and other ill-defined diseases of early infancy | - | - | - | - | - |
| Other causes* | 1 | - | - | - | 1 |
| All causes | 9 | 1 | 1 | - | 11 |

* Cause of death

| Case No. | Cause |
|----------|--|
| 1 | I. (a) Tentorial tear. (b) Breech delivery. |

II. SOCIAL CONDITIONS

A superficial view of the level of expenditure on the comforts and luxuries of life indicates that Bedford, as well as the country as a whole, continues to enjoy unexampled prosperity.

Yet it seems that the basis of this prosperity is essentially insecure and that the conditions of the present economic system bear some resemblance to the Professor's scheme imagined in Lewis Carroll's *Sylvie and Bruno*,* and to the real conditions which existed during the economic collapse of the Roman empire, a time when a crushing government expenditure was paid for, not indeed with pieces of paper, but with pieces of metal without intrinsic value, which were given a purely fictitious value, could be multiplied indefinitely and in consequence soon ceased to have any value at all.

These reflections make it doubtful how long the present high and, it must be admitted in many respects wasteful, expenditure can be continued on the present health and social services, and what the precise effect may be of future economic changes on the health of the people.

* The emperor wanted to make everybody in Outland twice as rich as he was before . . . So I [the Professor] suggested that he might do it by doubling the value of every coin and banknote in Outland . . . And you never saw such universal joy. The shops are full from morning to night. Everybody's buying everything.

III. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. GENERAL

With few exceptions all houses have an internal water supply and are connected with the sewers.

2. WATER SUPPLY

(A) QUALITY AND QUANTITY

I am indebted to the Water Engineer, Mr. A. B. Beardmore, for the following information relating to the water supply.

(1) The water supply to the Borough has been satisfactory both in (a) quality and (b) quantity.

(2) A summary of bacteriological analyses of the raw water and water as supplied is given below:—

BACTERIOLOGICAL RESULTS, 1953

| Source | No. of samples | Presumptive Coliforms | | Faecal Coliforms | | Plate Counts | | |
|---|----------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------|
| | | Pos. | av. orgs. per 100 ml. | Pos. | av. orgs. per 100 ml. | No. of samples | orgs. per ml. | |
| | | | | | | | 37°C | 22°C |
| Raw Water ... | 48 | 48 | 1,260 + | 48 | 570 + | 48 | 336 | 2,216 |
| Treated Water: | | | | | | | | |
| Inside Works ... | 171 | nil | nil | nil | nil | 50 | 13 | 11 |
| Outlet to town | 364 | nil | nil | nil | nil | 61 | 9 | 32 |
| Taps, Meters & Mains not in service ... | 256 | 14* | present in 50 ml. only | * } 1 2 } 1 | 180 + present in 50 ml. only | — | — | — |

* The positive presumptive coliform samples from the town may be subdivided as follows:—

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Dirty standpipes and taps | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| New pipe lines | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Tests on meters after cleaning | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Repairs to stopcocks | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| Mains not supplied by the Borough | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Untraced transient non-faecal results | ... | ... | ... | 2 |

(3) The water has no plumbo-solvent action, monthly tests were all negative.

(4) No action was required in respect of any contamination of the supply.

The following table shows the results of chemical analyses of the raw water and fully treated water.

BEDFORD CORPORATION WATERWORKS
CHEMICAL ANALYSIS OF RAW AND TREATED WATER FOR 1953

| | Raw Water | | Water into supply | |
|--|-----------|--------------|-------------------|---------------|
| | Average | Range | Average | Range |
| Reaction (pH) | 7.8 | 7.4-8.0 | 7.6 | 7.4-7.8 |
| Turbidity (Silica scale) | 18 | 5-95 | Less than 1.0 | Nil to 1.1 |
| Colour (Hazen Units) | 27 | 5-180 | Less than 5.0 | Less than 5.0 |
| Carbonate Hardness | 234 | 194-256 | 225 | 172-242 |
| Permanent Hardness | 117 | 84-180 | 124 | |
| Total Hardness | 351 | 312-400 | 349 | 294-392 |
| Cl ₂ as chlorides | 32 | 27-45 | 34 | 26-44 |
| Nitrogen as nitrites | 0.05 | — | nil | — |
| Nitrogen Ammoniacal | 0.07 | 0.01-0.28 | 0.017 | trace to 0.05 |
| Nitrogen Albuminoid | 0.31 | 0.16-0.68 | 0.18 | 0.07-0.26 |
| Nitrogen Nitrates | 3.4 | 1.0 to 7.1 | 2.8 | 0.9-5.6 |
| O ₂ from KMNO ₄ in 3 hrs at 37°C. | 2.6 | 1.6 to 5.9 | 1.2 | 0.7 to 1.9 |
| Conductivity | 685 | 450-750 | 680 | 610 to 710 |
| Total Solids | 508 | 476-550 | 505 | 456-550 |
| Iron | 0.1 | 0.15-trace | l.t. 0.05 | l.t. 0.05 |
| Copper | trace | 0.1 to trace | l.t. 0.05 | 0.1 to trace |
| Lead and Zinc | nil | nil to trace | nil | nil |
| Calcium as Ca | 129 | 111 to 153 | 127 | 110-156 |
| Magnesium as Mg | 12 | 5-19 | 12 | 4-18 |
| Manganese | trace | — | nil | nil |
| Fluorine | 0.31 | 0.23-0.45 | 0.3 | 0.23-0.47 |
| Sulphates | 110 | — | 124 | — |
| Silica (Si O ₂) | 3.5 | — | 2.5 | — |
| Phosphates (PO ₄) | 0.26 | 0.7-0.08 | 0.18 | 0.36 to 0.1 |
| Aluminium | 0.1 | — | Less than 0.1 | Less than 0.1 |

There was no change in the scheme of taking water samples for examination in the Public Health Laboratory.

The following table shows the result of these examinations.

BACTERIOLOGICAL RESULTS, 1953. FULLY TREATED WATER

| No. of samples of water in the course of distribution | Presumptive Coliforms | | Faecal Coliforms | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | Pos. | av. orgs. per 100 ml. | Pos. | av. orgs. per 100 ml. |
| 300 | 6 | 6 | — | — |

In no case were faecal coliforms, which would be an index of dangerous pollution, found in the water as supplied. Further investigations are as a general rule made when presumptive coliforms are found without waiting for the complete bacteriological report. Often some trivial and quite accidental contaminations are found as a result.

(B) UNTREATED RAW WATER

Fifty samples were taken from the Borough Pumping Station. The following table shows the results of these samples.

| Presumptive coliforms per 100 ml. | | Faecal coliforms per 100 ml. | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|--------|
| Highest | Lowest | Highest | Lowest |
| 1,800+ | 80 | 1,800+ | 13 |

The results are satisfactory for a low-land river such as the Ouse, and the closely connected wells.

(C) SUPPLY TO DWELLING HOUSES

All houses are supplied from public water mains direct except 7 houses by 2 wells and 16 supplied by 9 standpipes.

(D) SWIMMING BATHS AND PADDLING POOL

Samples were taken from six officially controlled or generally recognised bathing places in the river and one paddling pool. The results are as follows.

| No. of samples | Presumptive coliforms per 100 ml. | | Faecal coliforms per 100 ml. | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|--------|
| | Highest | Lowest | Highest | Lowest |
| 55 | 1,800+ | 25 | 1,800+ | 5 |

The results are comparable to those shown above of samples taken of the raw water before treatment at the waterworks. There is no standard for outdoor swimming pools, but generally it seems that individual results are satisfactory.

IV. HOUSING

1. General

For details of the work carried out on houses under the Housing and Public Health Acts reference is made to the report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

As mentioned in previous reports a large amount of the older property in the town is, on account of increasing age and recent difficulty in getting repairs done and also of raised standards of housing, in such a state that such houses cannot by any reasonable or even possible expenditure be brought up to a satisfactory standard.

The Council, therefore, through the Committees concerned, decided that a beginning might be made in the matter of slum clearance to the estimated extent of about 25 houses a year. The following table shows the work carried out in accordance with this policy.

| | | |
|--|--------|----|
| Number of houses represented to Local Authority as unfit and incapable of being made fit at a reasonable expense | | 25 |
| Number of houses represented in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | | 13 |
| Number of houses voluntarily closed (early 1954) | ... | 1 |
| Number of houses still awaiting at the end of the year formal legal action in accordance with the representation | | 11 |

In all cases action has been at the time of writing or will be taken, in accordance with the representation, by demolition or in one case by an undertaking not to permit the premises to be used for human habitation. Actual demolition had not been completed at the end of the year in any case. Preliminary steps were taken by negotiation with the owners for getting rid of the 100 temporary bungalows in the Mile Road and Miller Close areas, all of which suffer to a greater or less extent from dampness and which it has been impossible to bring into a satisfactory condition.

2. New Houses

During the years 1945 to 1953 the following numbers and type of new houses were completed.

NEW HOUSES AND CONVERSIONS, 1945-1953.

| | (1) Prefabricated Houses (Council) | | (2) Permanent Houses (Council) | (3) Erected on Licences issued to Builders | (4) Conversions under Licences issued to Builders Houses into Flats | | (5) Other Adaptations on Licences issued to Builders, Additional units of accommodation | (6) Adaptations of Requisitioned Houses | | (7) Total additional units of accommodation provided |
|------------------|--|-----------|--------------------------------------|---|--|------|--|--|-------------------|---|
| | Temporary | Permanent | | | (i) | (ii) | | Houses adapted (i) | For Families (ii) | |
| 1945-1952 Totals | 180 | 158 | 925 | 194 | 89 | 204 | 7 | 42 | 138 | 1,675 |
| 1953 | — | — | 279 | 68 | 9 | 17 | 1 | — | — | 356 |
| Totals | 180 | 158 | 1,204 | 262 | 98 | 221 | 8 | 42 | 138 | 2,031 |

NOTES—The totals in column (7) are obtained by adding the figures in columns (1), (2), (3) and (5) as they stand, and in the case of columns (4) and (6) by subtracting the figures in column (i) from those in column (ii) to find the number to be included in the total. This last procedure may not always be quite accurate, but gives a sufficient approximation.

3. Housing Requirements

I am informed by the Housing Manager that the number of applicants for houses on the books of the Corporation was 2,021 at the end of the year, and this number was reduced to 1,584 on the annual revision at the beginning of the present year.

In spite, therefore, of the large amount of house building the unsatisfied demand for houses is still large.

V. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

1. Milk

(A) DAIRIES AND DISTRIBUTORS

The following table gives the register of dairies and distributors as it stood at the end of the year.

| | | | |
|--|-----|-----|----|
| Premises registered as dairies in the area | ... | ... | 16 |
| Milk distributors registered in area— | | | |
| (i) trading from premises within area | ... | ... | 17 |
| (ii) trading from premises outside area only | ... | ... | 6 |
| Total | ... | ... | 23 |

(B) MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATION) (RAW MILK) REGULATIONS, 1949 MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATION) (PASTEURISED AND STERILIZED MILK) REGULATIONS, 1949

The following table shows the licences granted under the above named Orders.

| | <i>Number of Licences</i> | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| | <i>Raw Milk</i> | <i>Pasteurised Milk</i> |
| Tuberculin tested—Dealers | 12* | 13† |
| Supplementary | 3 | 3 |

* Three of these licences were in respect of establishments in the area at which pasteurising was carried out. All of the dealers dealt in Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised) Milk.

† One of these licences (a pasteurising establishment) was withdrawn on request of the dealer.

The following table shows the results of the laboratory examinations of specially designated milk. Failures to satisfy the tests are now usually due to some comparatively minor defect in the processing plant or its operation; and the vigilance and, when necessary, advice of the inspector is enough to maintain a satisfactory standard.

| Source | Grade | No. of Samples | Satisfactory | Not Satisfactory |
|---------------|------------------|---|--------------|------------------|
| Dairy { | Pasteurised ... | 46 | 42 | 4 |
| | T.T. Pasteurised | 2 | 2 | — |
| Roundsmen ... | Pasteurised ... | 43 | 40 | 3 |
| Schools ... | Pasteurised ... | 87 | 80 | 6 |
| Totals ... | | 178 | 164 | 13 |
| | | One sample taken from school— Test invalid | | |

2. Meat

The following table shows the number of carcasses inspected and condemned during the year. The figures show little difference from those of the past few years.

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED, 1953

| | Cattle (exclud- ing Cows) | Cows | Calves | Sheep and Lambs | Pigs |
|--|------------------------------------|-------|--------|-----------------------|-------|
| Number killed and inspected ... | 4,371 | 624 | 3,290 | 12,038 | 5,271 |
| All Diseases except Tuberculosis— | | | | | |
| Whole carcasses condemned | 7 | 6 | 17 | 32 | 66 |
| Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned | 1,376 | 189 | 25 | 282 | 1,690 |
| Percentage of number in- spected affected with dis- ease other than tubercu- losis | 31·64 | 31·25 | 1·38 | 2·61 | 33·31 |
| Tuberculosis only— | | | | | |
| Whole carcasses condemned | 11 | 8 | — | — | 9 |
| Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned | 250 | 77 | 1 | — | 180 |
| Percentage of number inspec- ted affected with tubercu- losis | 5·9 | 13·62 | — | — | 3·58 |

MEAT WEIGHT CONDEMNED

The following table shows the total weight of diseased and unsound home killed meat condemned in 1953.

| Class of Animal | Tuberculosis | | | Other Disease | | | Total lbs. |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|--------|------------------|---------------------------------|--------|---------------|
| | Whole Carcase | Part Carcase and Offal | lbs. | Whole Carcase | Part Carcase and Offal | lbs. | |
| Cattle (excluding Cows) ... | 11 | 250 | 18,342 | 7 | 1,376 | 26,712 | 45,054 |
| Cows | 8 | 77 | 8,168 | 6 | 189 | 7,689 | 15,857 |
| Calves | — | 1 | 31 | 17 | 25 | 1,091 | 1,122 |
| Sheep and Lambs | — | — | — | 32 | 282 | 3,015 | 3,015 |
| Pigs | 9 | 180 | 5,452 | 66 | 1,690 | 14,855 | 20,307 |
| Totals ... | 28 | 508 | 31,993 | 128 | 3,562 | 53,362 | 85,355 |

Meat condemned on inspection at the slaughterhouses is removed by contractors on behalf of the Ministry of Food.

3. Other Foods

The following table shows the amount of other foods condemned.

| <i>Class of Food</i> | | | | | | | | <i>lbs.</i> |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|
| Cheese | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 31½ |
| Cooked Ham | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 179 |
| Cooked Meat | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 63 |
| Dried Fruit | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 238 |
| Faggots | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| Fish | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 726 |
| Fish Cakes | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 11 |
| Ham | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 45 |
| Ice Cream Cauverture | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 50 |
| Jelly Cubes | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 80 |
| Pearl Barley | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 24 |
| Pork Back Fats | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 190 |
| Poultry (26 head) | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 100 |
| Rabbits | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 173 |
| Sausages | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 832½ |
| Sugar | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 95 |
| Swiss Rolls | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 22 |
| Turkey (1) | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 17½ |
| Tinned Goods—various commodities (6,753 containers) | | | | | | | | 9,552 |
| Total lbs. | | | | | | | | 12,432½ |

The bulk of this unfit food was used for animal feeding purposes; but that which was unsuitable for this purpose was buried at controlled tipping refuse sites.

4. Ice Cream

One hundred and forty-nine premises are registered under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938 for the sale of ice cream. In 144 of these premises only ice cream manufactured elsewhere is sold. In only 5 premises is ice cream manufactured.

The following table shows the results of testing ice cream in accordance with the agreed bacterial standards.

| | | | | | | <i>Number of samples</i> | <i>Percentage in grades</i> |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Grade 1 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 23 | 46% |
| Grade 2 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 22 | 44% |
| Grade 3 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5 | 10% |
| Grade 4 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — | — |
| Total | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 50 | |

To speak generally from year to year an increased percentage of samples fall into Grades 1 and 2, which are satisfactory, and fewer into the unsatisfactory Grades 3 and 4. This improvement is no doubt due to the fact that the trade is becoming increasingly concentrated in the hands of the larger wholesalers whose methods of production are on the whole more satisfactory, though even in these cases there may be contamination on division and sale of bulk supplies.

5. Adulteration of Foods

Sixty-three samples of milk and 42 samples of other foods and medicinal preparations were submitted to the Public Analyst.

A summary of samples procured is shown in the following table:—

TABLE OF SAMPLES TAKEN

| Commodity | No. of Samples | | | No. Genuine | | | No. Adulterated | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|---------|------|-------------|---------|------|-----------------|---------|------|
| | Form. | Inform. | Tot. | Form. | Inform. | Tot. | Form. | Inform. | Tot. |
| Arrowroot | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Beef Sausage | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Black Currant Cough Syrup | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Black Currant Juice | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Black Pudding | — | 2 | 2 | — | 2 | 2 | | | |
| Bronchial Pastilles | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Butter | — | 3 | 3 | — | 3 | 3 | | | |
| Cinnamon and Quinine | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Cooking Fats | — | 3 | 3 | — | 3 | 3 | | | |
| Cream of Tartar | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Eucalyptus Oil | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Faggot | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Ground Cinnamon | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Horseradish Sauce | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Ice Cream | — | 10 | 10 | — | 10 | 10 | | | |
| Lemon Juice | — | 1 | 1 | — | — | — | — | 1 | 1 |
| Lemonade Crystals | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Liver Sausage | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Margarine | — | 3 | 3 | — | 3 | 3 | | | |
| Meringue Mixture | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Mixed Candied Peel | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Milk | 63 | — | 63 | 63 | — | 63 | | | |
| Olive Oil | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Pork Pie | — | 2 | 2 | — | 2 | 2 | | | |
| Rose Hip Syrup | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Sausage Roll | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Totals | 63 | 42 | 105 | 63 | 41 | 104 | — | 1 | 1 |

The following statement shows the nature of the one sample found deficient, and action taken in this case.

ACTION TAKEN ON ADULTERATED SAMPLE

| Serial Number of Sample | | Commodity | Nature of Adulteration | Remarks as to action taken |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------|--|---|
| Formal | Informal | | | |
| — | C338 | Lemon Juice | Deficient in ascorbic acid (Vitamin C) to the extent of at least 33 per cent | Vendor cautioned. Producers informed by vendors and remaining stock (which was some 14 months old) withdrawn from sale. |

Samples of milk are also tested in the Public Health Department by the Gerber Test, which gives a rapid indication of the quality of the milk tested and enables the inspector either to give advice to the retailer or producer, or to take further samples for submission to the Public Analyst.

The following are the figures for the year.

GERBER TESTS

| | | | | |
|---------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Total Number Tested | ... | ... | ... | 27 |
| Satisfactory | ... | ... | ... | 23 |
| Not Satisfactory | ... | ... | ... | 4 |

6. Slaughterhouses

During the year the work of slaughtering remained concentrated in three slaughterhouses under the Ministry of Food.

1,651 visits were paid to these slaughterhouses for purposes of meat inspection and inspection of the premises. Towards the end of the year the Council gave consideration to the policy which should be adopted on the cessation of government control timed for July of the present year. They decided, as the only practical policy, that licenses should be renewed in order to enable occupiers of private slaughterhouses who had ceased slaughtering during the war to begin slaughtering on the cessation of control if they so desired. This renewal was to be made provided the occupiers undertook the bare minimum of repairs and redecorations, but on the understanding that there was no guarantee of repeated renewal for an indefinite period, and that as soon as the future long term policy should be settled a very much higher standard, in practice impossible to achieve in most of the existing slaughterhouses, might be required for licensing. History beyond this point will belong to the present year.

7. Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933

At the end of December, 1953 there were 36 slaughtermen licensed under this Act.

8. Liquid Egg

In connection with a research survey being undertaken by the Ministry of Food samples of liquid egg, used in the preparation of flour confectionery, have been obtained for bacteriological examination and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory Service.

Thirty-six such samples were obtained during the year and in all cases the bacteriologist reported that no organism of the Salmonellae group had been isolated.

VI. PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

1. Infectious Diseases, other than Tuberculosis

(A) GENERAL STATISTICS

The following table shows in summary form the number of infectious diseases notified during the year, together with the number of deaths from these diseases.

DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1953

| Disease | Total cases notified | Total deaths registered |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Scarlet Fever | 126 | — |
| Whooping Cough | 338 | 1 |
| Diphtheria | — | — |
| Measles | 1,703 | — |
| Acute Pneumonia | 112 | 21 |
| Meningococcal Infection | 1 | — |
| Acute Poliomyelitis— | | |
| Paralytic | — | — |
| Non-Paralytic | 3 | — |
| Acute Encephalitis— | | |
| Infective | 2 | — |
| Post Infectious | — | — |
| Dysentery | 133 | — |
| Ophthalmia Neonatorum | 2 | — |
| Puerperal Pyrexia | 42 | — |
| Smallpox | — | — |
| Paratyphoid Fever | — | — |
| Typhoid Fever | — | — |
| Food Poisoning | 9 | — |
| Jaundice | 16 | — |
| Erysipelas | 5 | — |
| Malaria | 1 | — |
| Influenzal Meningitis (Local requirement only) | — | — |
| Scabies (Local requirement only) | 3 | — |

The following table gives the number of infectious diseases notified divided into groups of age and sex.

| | | | Scarlet Fever | | Whooping Cough | | Acute Poliomyelitis | | Measles | | Diphtheria | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|---------------|----|----------------|-----|---------------------|----|--------------------------|-----|--------------------|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| Under 1 year | ... | ... | — | — | 12 | 8 | — | — | 16 | 18 | — | — |
| 1 to 2 years | ... | ... | 1 | 5 | 38 | 28 | — | — | 167 | 138 | — | — |
| 3 to 4 years | ... | ... | 12 | 13 | 54 | 39 | — | — | 219 | 198 | — | — |
| 5 to 9 years | ... | ... | 48 | 31 | 76 | 70 | — | — | 441 | 398 | — | — |
| 10 to 14 years | ... | ... | 5 | 2 | — | 2 | — | — | 32 | 23 | — | — |
| 15 to 24 years | ... | ... | 2 | 5 | — | 1 | — | — | 22 | 17 | — | — |
| 25 years and over | ... | ... | 1 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 12 | — | — |
| Age unknown | ... | ... | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Total (all ages) | ... | ... | 69 | 57 | 184 | 154 | 2 | 1 | 899 | 804 | — | — |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | Dysentery | | Smallpox | | Acute Encephalitis | | Enteric or Typhoid fever | | Paratyphoid fevers | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| Under 5 years | ... | ... | 10 | 4 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 5 to 14 years | ... | ... | 10 | 9 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 15 to 44 years | ... | ... | 5 | 8 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 45 to 64 years | ... | ... | 17 | 10 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 65 years and over | ... | ... | 21 | 18 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Age unknown | ... | ... | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Total (all ages) | ... | ... | 63 | 49 | — | — | 2 | — | — | — | — | — |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | Erysipelas | | Food poisoning | | Puerperal Pyrexia | | Jaundice | | Malaria | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| Under 5 years | ... | ... | — | — | 1 | — | — | — | 1 | 1 | — | — |
| 5 to 14 years | ... | ... | — | — | 1 | 1 | — | — | 1 | 5 | — | — |
| 15 to 44 years | ... | ... | — | — | 1 | 5 | — | — | 2 | 2 | 1 | — |
| 45 to 64 years | ... | ... | 1 | 2 | — | — | — | — | 2 | 2 | — | — |
| 65 years and over | ... | ... | — | 2 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Age unknown | ... | ... | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Total (all ages) | ... | ... | 1 | 4 | 3 | 6 | — | 42 | 6 | 10 | 1 | — |

(B) INDIVIDUAL DISEASES

Scarlet Fever

During the year 126 cases occurred giving a case rate of 2.30 in comparison with 1.39 for England and Wales.

Whooping Cough

Three hundred and thirty-eight cases were notified. The prevalence was greatest in the third quarter of the year. One death in a child aged 2 months occurred from this disease.

Diphtheria

No cases occurred for the sixth year in succession, a result which may be attributed to the success of the immunisation campaign.

Measles

During the year 1,703 cases of measles were notified. This is the highest number that has been notified in any year since the beginning of notification in 1940. The cases were mostly concentrated in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th months of the year.

Up to 1946 measles usually occurred in epidemic form every other year. From 1947 to 1951 inclusive, cases of measles occurred in considerable numbers each year, and generally the disease was continuously present to a greater or less extent, while in 1952 the number of cases dropped to 84. From the table which follows it appears possible that measles may be reverting again to a two year periodicity.

MEASLES—BEDFORD, 1940–1953

| <i>Year</i> | | | | | | <i>Number of cases notified</i> |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------------------------------|
| 1940 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,351 |
| 1941 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 277 |
| 1942 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 25 |
| 1943 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 770 |
| 1944 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 12 |
| 1945 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 838 |
| 1946 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 30 |
| 1947 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 742 |
| 1948 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 257 |
| 1949 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 437 |
| 1950 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 676 |
| 1951 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 202 |
| 1952 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 84 |
| 1953 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,703 |

Pneumonia

One hundred and twelve cases were notified in comparison with 50 in 1952. Acute pneumonia caused 21 deaths, in comparison with 26 in 1952. Increase in the prevalence of pneumonia as shown by notification is no doubt related to the increased prevalence of influenza which occurred in epidemic form in the early part of the year.

Meningococcal Infection

One case only of meningococcal meningitis occurred, in a female patient aged 43.

Acute Poliomyelitis

Three cases of non-paralytic poliomyelitis were notified, in a male aged 33, a female aged 46, and a male aged 20. It appeared quite clear that in the first case infection occurred with the army abroad.

Epidemic Encephalitis

Two cases of infective encephalitis were notified in males aged 25 and 49. The former patient died.

Dysentery

One hundred and thirty-three cases of dysentery were notified. Though this disease is notifiable yet from the fact that the infectious organism is now generally the *sonne* bacillus and the symptoms are generally quite mild there is no doubt that most cases do in fact escape notification.

In the early part of the year there appeared from the prevalence of diarrhoea good reason to think that dysentery was widespread in some of the schools. It appeared quite impossible, on account of the great labour which would be involved and the uncertainty of any result, to attempt to combat the disease by bacteriological means. The disease seemed to be most prevalent in May. Generally it spreads rapidly in the community. It appears that an important means of spread is by dust from contaminated hands, which would be specially likely to take place in infants' schools, where habits of hygiene are less well developed than among adults and older children. After consultation with the Director of the Public Health Laboratory it was decided to inform all schools of the prevalence of dysentery and to advise that all children with diarrhoea should be kept away from school, and in infants' schools that family contacts of patients with diarrhoea should also be excluded for a short period of about ten days. It is hoped that this advice may have served to limit spread to some extent. From information received it appeared that the number of children absent in the schools most heavily infected were 72, 67 and 42, in schools with totals of 352, 342 and 561 respectively.

Food Poisoning

Nine cases of food poisoning were notified which occurred in three quite limited outbreaks, of which details are as follows:—

1. Two members of family notified, mother aged 30 and boy aged 3 months. One other child aged 8 was also in hospital with the same infection but was not formally notified. In this case the infective organism was *salmonella typhi-murium*, but the infecting food was not traced. Bacteriological tests were taken till the patients were found to be free from infection.

2. Three members of family infected, male aged 35 and children aged 6 and 5. Infection was due to the same organism, but here also the source remained untraced.

3. Four female residents at an institution in the town had symptoms which were attributed to a tin of crab paste. The circumstantial evidence that this paste was in fact the cause of the symptoms appeared quite strong, but no food poisoning organisms were recovered from the remains of the paste, from tins of a similar batch or from the patients themselves.

Jaundice

Sixteen cases were notified, a number identical with that for 1952.

Influenza

This disease was prevalent during the early part of the year, the highest prevalence having been during the first two months. The number of deaths attributed to influenza was 12.

2. Tuberculosis

The following table shows the number of new cases and the number of deaths in their age groups.

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CASES AND DEATHS

| Age Periods | | | | New Cases | | | | Deaths | | | |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-------------|----|-----------------|---|-------------|---|-----------------|---|
| | | | | Respiratory | | Non-Respiratory | | Respiratory | | Non-Respiratory | |
| | | | | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| 0 | ... | ... | ... | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 1 | ... | ... | ... | 1 | 3 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 5 | ... | ... | ... | 2 | 1 | 1 | — | — | — | — | — |
| 10 | ... | ... | ... | 3 | 1 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 15 | ... | ... | ... | 3 | 1 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 20 | ... | ... | ... | 7 | 4 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 25 | ... | ... | ... | 8 | 5 | — | 2 | 3 | — | — | — |
| 35 | ... | ... | ... | 8 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | — | — | — |
| 45 | ... | ... | ... | 8 | 2 | 1 | — | 2 | — | — | — |
| 55 | ... | ... | ... | 4 | 2 | — | — | 1 | — | — | — |
| 65 and upwards | ... | ... | ... | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Totals | | | | 48 | 25 | 3 | 4 | 8 | — | — | — |

There were 8 deaths due to tuberculosis corresponding to a death rate of 0·15 per thousand, which may be compared with the rate of 0·20 for England and Wales. All the 8 deaths were due to respiratory tuberculosis.

The table for the last 6 years shows the decline in the death rate from this disease which has taken place in Bedford and the country generally.

TUBERCULOSIS DEATH RATES

| Year | All Forms | | | Respiratory | | | Non-Respiratory | | |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | No. in Bedford | Rate per 1,000 | | No. in Bedford | Rate per 1,000 | | No. in Bedford | Rate per 1,000 | |
| | | Bedford | England and Wales | | Bedford | England and Wales | | Bedford | England and Wales |
| 1948 | 17 | 0.32 | 0.51 | 13 | 0.25 | 0.44 | 4 | 0.08 | 0.07 |
| 1949 | 19 | 0.36 | 0.45 | 15 | 0.28 | 0.40 | 4 | 0.08 | 0.05 |
| 1950 | 9 | 0.17 | 0.36 | 9 | 0.17 | 0.32 | 0 | — | 0.04 |
| 1951 | 13 | 0.24 | 0.31 | 12 | 0.22 | 0.27 | 1 | 0.02 | 0.04 |
| 1952 | 9 | 0.17 | 0.24 | 9 | 0.17 | 0.21 | 0 | — | 0.04 |
| 1953 | 8 | 0.15 | 0.20 | 8 | 0.15 | 0.18 | 0 | — | 0.02 |
| Average 1948-1953 | 13 | 0.24 | 0.35 | 11 | 0.21 | 0.30 | 3 | 0.03 | 0.04 |

3. Scabies and Verminous Infestation

(A) GENERAL

The Cleansing Station is now opened only as occasion requires for treatment of scabies or verminous infestation occurring either in the Borough or in the neighbourhood, including school children who are the responsibility of the local education authority. Fortunately, its use is not often now required.

(B) SCABIES

The following table shows the action taken under various heads in connection with the treatment of scabies.

NUMBER OF NEW CASES OF SCABIES AND CONTACTS EXAMINED AND TREATED AT CLEANSING STATION DURING 1953

| | Bedford | County |
|---------------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Number of new cases | 2 | — |
| Number of examinations | 4 | — |
| Number of treatments— | | |
| Diagnosed cases | 4 | — |
| Contacts | — | — |
| Total | 4 | — |
| Number of families concerned | 2 | — |
| Number of households concerned | 2 | — |

Scabies has almost disappeared from this Borough.

(C) VERMINOUS INFESTATION

The following table shows the action taken in connection with verminous infestations.

NUMBER OF PERSONS AND VERMINOUS HEADS EXAMINED AND
TREATED AT THE CLEANSING STATION DURING 1953

| | New Cases | | Treatments | | Examinations | |
|---------------------|-----------|--------|------------|--------|--------------|--------|
| | Bedford | County | Bedford | County | Bedford | County |
| Pre-School Children | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| School Children ... | — | 17 | — | 34 | — | 30 |
| Adults ... | 2 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 5 |
| Totals ... | 2 | 20 | 3 | 42 | 4 | 35 |

VII. MISCELLANEOUS

(A) CARE OF THE AGED

A number of aged persons are under the continued supervision of the Chief Sanitary Inspector who works in close co-operation with the staff of the County Council. The aim is to watch generally and prevent deterioration of conditions by all possible means such as the provision of a home help, the care of the district nurse and supervision by the health visitor.

In two cases it was found necessary to apply for a Magistrate's Order for compulsory removal to hospital under Section 47 of the National Assistance Act, 1948. No one concerned likes such action, which is taken only after full consideration and a personal visit by the Public Health Committee after a report from the Medical Officer of Health.

(B) MORTUARY

The following table shows the work done in connection with the mortuary. The total figures show little change from the previous year. It will be noted that more than half of the bodies came from outside areas.

BODIES RECEIVED

| Post Mortems Carried Out | | | Post Mortems Not Carried Out | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------|
| Bodies received from Borough | *Bodies received from other areas | Total | Bodies received from Borough | Bodies received from other areas | Total |
| 34 | 42 | 76 | 5 | — | 5 |

Total bodies received—81

* One body received from a hospital.

(C) DOMESTIC BATHS, COMMERCIAL ROAD

The following table shows the attendances made during the year, as compared with 1952.

| | | | | 1953 | 1952 |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| Women ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,005 | 1,321 |
| Men ... | ... | ... | ... | 579 | 476 |
| Total | ... | ... | ... | 1,585 | 1,797 |

It will be observed that there was a decrease of 212 attendances in the 1953 figures over those for the previous year.

CONCLUSION

It is men and not walls . . . that constitute a city.

THUCYDIDES

Planning is still the order of the day, planning, often into the indefinite future, of health and other social services, of the creation of new towns and the reconstruction of old. With most of these matters the Town Council and the Public Health Department are concerned to a greater or less degree. And yet among all these plans there is one subject which is neither planned nor admitted to be unable to be planned, namely the number and quality of the future population which is to bring into being, and to enjoy the results of all these schemes; but the success or failure of plans would seem to depend more than anything else on the human material concerned. Anyone who considers seriously the observations made under the headings of birth rate, death rate, and social circumstances in this report may wonder how far these plans can be realised. It is possible to plan our future towns grouped round their central fun fairs provided adequately with three storey car parks and other conveniences, and yet unless the future population can also be planned – and it must be admitted that this is quite impossible – it seems certain that all these plans can receive at best, or at worst, only a very partial and temporary fulfilment. If these reflections were to influence anyone, the conclusion should be that planning has at present far overstepped the bounds of the reasonably possible and should be limited to necessary action to meet pressing and immediate needs. Our planners, however, are not likely to be persuaded by such a voice crying in the wilderness, and their victims can but wait the results of their action.



BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

REPORT

OF THE

Chief Sanitary Inspector

For the Year 1953

CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|--|--------|
| PREFACE | 43 |
| I. SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA | 44 |
| 1. SUMMARY OF GENERAL INSPECTIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES | |
| 2. TABLE SHOWING DETAILED NATURE OF WORK CARRIED OUT AS A RESULT OF INSPECTIONS | |
| (a) <i>Dwelling Houses</i> | |
| (b) <i>Other Housing Accommodation</i> | |
| (c) <i>Food Premises</i> | |
| (d) <i>Other Premises</i> | |
| II. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA | 49 |
| 1. HOUSING | |
| (a) <i>Inspections</i> | |
| (i) Housing Act, 1936—Section 9 | |
| (ii) Housing Act, 1936—Section 11 | |
| (iii) Bungalows erected by Ministry of Works | |
| (iv) Public Health Act, 1936 | |
| (v) Observations | |
| (b) <i>General</i> | |
| (i) Overcrowding | |
| (ii) Purchase of Property | |
| (iii) Housing—Amenities | |
| (a) <i>Baths</i> | |
| (b) <i>Water Supply</i> | |
| (c) <i>Houses without secondary means of access</i> | |
| (d) <i>Closet Accommodation</i> | |
| 2. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE | |
| (a) <i>Drainage</i> | |
| (b) <i>Premises not connected to sewers</i> | |
| 3. SANITARY DUSTBINS | |
| 4. INSPECTION OF PREMISES (OTHER THAN HOUSES)— PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936 | |
| (a) <i>Offices</i> | |
| (b) <i>Public Houses</i> | |
| (c) <i>Hotels, Boarding Houses and Hostels</i> | |
| (d) <i>Cinemas, Theatre and Dance Halls</i> | |
| (e) <i>Rivers, Streams and Ponds</i> | |
| (f) <i>Places where Animals are kept</i> | |
| (g) <i>Smoke Abatement</i> | |
| 5. FOODS AND DRUGS ACT, 1938 | |
| (1) <i>Food Premises</i> | |
| (2) <i>Food Hygiene</i> | |

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| III. SHOPS ACTS, 1950—SECTION 38 | 60 |
| IV. PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS WHICH CAN BE CON- TROLLED BY BYELAWS AND REGULATIONS ... | 61 |
| 1. HOUSES LET IN LODGINGS | |
| 2. COMMON LODGING HOUSES | |
| 3. MOVABLE DWELLINGS | |
| (a) <i>At Fairground</i> | |
| (b) <i>Private Sites</i> | |
| (c) <i>Chalets</i> | |
| (d) <i>Industrial Sites</i> | |
| V. PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949 ... | 64 |
| VI. NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948 | 66 |
| 1. SECTION 47—CARE AND ATTENTION OF AGED PERSONS | |
| 2. SECTION 50—BURIAL OR CREMATION OF THE DEAD | |
| VII. RENT RESTRICTION ACTS, 1920-1946 | 69 |
| 1. UNFURNISHED AND FURNISHED ACCOMMODATION | |
| 2. GENERAL | |
| VIII. FACTORIES ACT, 1937 | 70 |
| 1. INSPECTIONS | |
| 2. OUTWORK | |
| IX. DISINFECTION AND DISINFESTATION | 73 |
| 1. DISINFECTION | |
| 2. DISINFESTATION | |
| X. MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, 1926 | 74 |
| XI. MISCELLANEOUS | 75 |
| 1. INDUSTRIAL PREMISES | |
| (a) <i>Dust and Fumes</i> | |
| (b) <i>Fumes</i> | |
| (c) <i>Noises</i> | |
| (d) <i>Noise, dust and husks</i> | |
| 2. GENERAL | |
| (a) <i>Building Plans</i> | |
| (b) <i>Harpur Trust Almshouses</i> | |
| (c) <i>Town Planning and re-development schemes</i> | |
| (d) <i>Educational activities</i> | |

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
TOWN HALL,
BEDFORD.

June, 1954.

To HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR,
ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS OF THE
BOROUGH OF BEDFORD.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of submitting my Annual Report for 1953, the 25th year as your Chief Sanitary Inspector, and as can be seen the duties have been many and varied.

Meat inspection still takes up a large amount of time outside normal office hours, especially during peak periods, but it is hoped that when in July of this year the Ministry of Food ceases to control slaughtering it may be possible to reduce the amount of slaughtering and the hours worked.

With regard to staff an additional Inspector took up duties in May. One Inspector left in July and was replaced in November, 1953, so for a time the Department was not fully staffed.

I desire to place on record the valuable services rendered by Mr. G. V. BurrIDGE, Disinfector and Drain Tester, who retired in October last after 30 years faithful service.

In view of changes in staffing the opportunity was taken to re-organize the duties of the Sanitary Inspectors and General Assistants, whereby the town was divided into three districts, each having a separate Inspector and a general assistant.

I again desire to record my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their support in the work undertaken, and to express my appreciation to the Medical Officer of Health and other Chief Officers for their helpful assistance and co-operation and to my Deputy, the Sanitary Inspectors and staff, for their ready and loyal support.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

F. C. HAYNES.

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

Annual Report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector

F. C. HAYNES, Cert.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

I. SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

This report shows the nature of the duties carried out by the Sanitary Inspectors during the year 1953, and includes particulars of sanitary inspections in the area; in conjunction with details referred to in the report of the Medical Officer of Health relating to Housing (Section IV), and Inspection and Supervision of Food Section (V).

1. Summary of General Inspections and Administrative Duties

Housing

| | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-------|
| Houses inspected under the Housing Act, 1936 | ... | ... | 247 |
| Houses requiring repairs | ... | ... | 149 |
| Houses totally unfit for human habitation | ... | ... | 26* |
| Houses repaired | ... | ... | 155 |
| Premises inspected under the Public Health Act, 1936 | ... | ... | 358 |
| Premises where nuisances discovered | ... | ... | 134 |
| Premises where nuisances abated | ... | ... | 74 |
| Revisits to houses under Housing and Public Health Acts | ... | ... | 2,079 |

Overcrowding

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Visits | ... | ... | ... | ... | 36 |
| Houses found to be overcrowded | ... | ... | ... | ... | 11 |

Infectious Diseases

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Investigations undertaken | ... | ... | ... | ... | 264 |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Verminous and Other Conditions

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Visits to verminous premises | ... | ... | ... | ... | 149 |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Drainage

| | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| House drains tested on payment of fee | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| Drains tested or inspected on complaint | ... | ... | ... | 521 |
| Revisits during repairs or reconstruction | ... | ... | ... | 432 |

Visits to

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Houses Let in Lodgings | ... | ... | ... | ... | 163 |
| Common Lodging Houses | ... | ... | ... | ... | 14 |
| Movable Dwellings, Caravans, etc. | ... | ... | ... | ... | 74 |
| Public Houses | ... | ... | ... | ... | 245 |

* Includes one house fit for human habitation but which formed part of a block of eight houses, on seven of which demolition orders were served.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Hotels | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 30 |
| Restaurants | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 208 |
| Fish Frying Premises | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 22 |
| Slaughterhouses | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,651 |
| Cowsheds, Dairies and Milkshops | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 143 |
| Other Shops and Premises where Food is prepared, stored or exposed for sale | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,797 |
| Bakehouses | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 125 |
| Places of Entertainment | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 35 |
| Factories with mechanical power | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 134 |
| Factories without mechanical power | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 20 |
| Work places | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 44 |
| Outworkers' premises | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Offices | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 160 |
| Shops under Section 38, Shop Acts, 1950 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 254 |
| Premises where animals are kept | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9 |
| Offensive trades premises | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 14 |
| Manufacturers and Stores—Rag Flock and other filling materials | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5 |
| Sundry nuisances | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 219 |
| Miscellaneous visits | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,043 |
| Borough Mortuary | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 45 |
| Baths and Treatment Centre | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 8 |

Foods and Drugs

Samples examined by Public Analyst:—

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Milk | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 63 |
| Ice Cream | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 10 |
| Other foods and drugs | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 32 |

Samples examined by the Public Health Laboratory Service:—

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Milk | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 178 |
| Ice Cream | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 50 |
| Liquid egg | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 36 |

Samples examined at the Public Health Department:—

| | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Milk | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 27 |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Total number of samples obtained for examination | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 396 |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Rats and Mice Destruction

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Inspection of premises by Sanitary Inspectors | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 342 |
| Inspection of premises by Rodent Operator | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 782 |
| Visits for treatment, including revisits | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2,108 |

Rent Restriction Acts

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Investigations and interviews | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 389 |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Smoke Abatement

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Observations made | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 191 |
| Interviews with managers, stokers, etc. | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 14 |
| Inspection of boiler plant | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 7 |

Merchandise Marks Act

| | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|
| Visits to traders' premises, stalls and vehicles | ... | ... | 710 |
|--|-----|-----|-----|

General and Office Routine

| | |
|--|-------|
| Visits for interviews with owners, agents, builders, tenants, etc. | 2,286 |
| Interviews at office with owners, agents, builders, tenants, etc. | 2,332 |

General Administration

Informal Notices served:—

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Housing Act | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 149 |
| Public Health Act | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 100 |
| Shops Act | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 7 |
| Factories Acts | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 6 |
| Food and Drugs Acts | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5 |
| Houses let in lodgings Byelaws | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 8 |
| Total number of informal notices served | | | | | | | 275 |

It was found necessary to serve six statutory notices during the year.

2. Table Showing Detailed Nature of Work carried out as a Result of Inspections

(A) DWELLING HOUSES

General Improvements

| | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Defective roofs repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | 82 |
| Eavesgutters and downspouts repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | 55 |
| Damp walls remedied | ... | ... | ... | ... | 38 |
| Defective walls, brickwork and pointing made sound | ... | ... | ... | ... | 57 |
| Rooms cleansed and redecorated | ... | ... | ... | ... | 118 |
| Defective floors repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | 71 |
| Defective windows repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | 255 |
| Defective doors repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | 74 |
| Defective firegrates repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | 34 |
| Defective stair treads repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9 |
| Handrails provided to stairs | ... | ... | ... | ... | 19 |
| Rooms provided with permanent means of ventilation | ... | ... | ... | ... | 7 |
| Defective coppers repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5 |
| Defective food cupboards made sound | ... | ... | ... | ... | — |
| Glazed sinks provided in lieu of defective sinks | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Sinks and waste pipes repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | 17 |
| Defective service pipes repaired | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |

Water Closets

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Defective W.Cs. repaired | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 42 |
| New W.Cs. built | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — |
| W.Cs. separated from barns | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 8 |
| Pedestal pans provided in lieu of defective pans | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 17 |
| W.C. fittings repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 69 |

Outhouses

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Outhouses repaired | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 28 |
| Outhouses demolished | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — |
| Spouting repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 21 |
| Outhouses cleansed | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — |
| Floors repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Doors provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |

Drainage

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Drains repaired | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9 |
| Drains wholly relaid | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 6 |
| Blocked drains cleared | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 204 |
| Inspection chambers constructed or repaired | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 20 |
| Soil and vent pipes repaired | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 11 |

Yards

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Houses at which yard paving was repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9 |
| Nuisances arising from keeping of animals | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — |
| Sanitary dustbins provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 17 |

Infectious and other Diseases

| | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Rooms disinfected | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 110 |
| Articles of bedding, clothing, etc., disinfected | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9,550 |

Disinfestation

| | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Rooms disinfested | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 177 |
| Articles of bedding, clothing, etc., disinfested | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 700 |

(B) OTHER HOUSING ACCOMMODATION

Houses Let in Lodgings

| | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Floors repaired | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — |
| Defective sinks replaced with glazed sinks | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — |
| Rooms and staircases and passages cleansed and redecorated | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Other improvements | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5 |

Common Lodging Houses

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Lime washing and general cleansing | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|

(C) FOOD PREMISES

Public Houses and Hotels

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| W.Cs. or urinals provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 24 |
| Washbasins provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 13 |
| Sinks provided in bar | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Waste pipes provided to sinks in bar | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Hot water supply provided over sink in bar | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| Rooms cleansed and redecorated | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 18 |
| Other improvements | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 6 |
| Drains repaired | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 6 |
| Drains wholly relaid | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4 |

Food Preparing Rooms

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| New building | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| General cleansing and redecoration | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 19 |
| Washbasins provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| W.C. compartments cleansed | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5 |
| Sanitary dustbins provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9 |
| Hot water supply provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| New fittings provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Other defects remedied | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |

Cowsheds and Dairies

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Dairies at which improvements made | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — |
| Dairies and cowsheds where limewashing and general cleansing undertaken | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 7 |

Slaughterhouses

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Regular periodic limewashing and general cleansing | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| Other improvements | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |

(D) OTHER PREMISES

Offices

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Rooms cleansed and redecorated | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 7 |
| W.Cs. repaired or renewed | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| Other improvements | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |

Factories

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Sanitary accommodation requirements complied with:— | | | | | | | | |
| (a) Provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| (b) Repaired | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 8 |
| Regular periodic limewashing and general cleansing | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| Drains repaired or cleansed | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | — |
| Other defects remedied | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |

Smoke Abatement

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Structural improvements | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|

Shops

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| W.Cs. provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| W.Cs. repaired | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| Drains repaired | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| Inspection chambers provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Washbasins provided | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| Hot water provided over washbasins | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4 |

II. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. Housing

(A) INSPECTIONS

(i) Housing Act, 1936. Section 9

The following list shows the streets in which housing inspection was carried out, together with the number where defects were discovered.

| <i>Address</i> | | <i>Defective</i> | <i>In Order</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---------------------|-----|------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Althorpe Street | ... | 32 | 17 | 49 |
| Balsall Street West | ... | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| Battison Street | ... | 17 | 5 | 22 |
| Bower Street | ... | 1 | — | 1 |
| College Road | ... | 35 | 16 | 51 |
| Cross Street | ... | 2 | 10 | 12 |
| Foster Street | ... | 1 | — | 1 |
| George Street | ... | 1 | — | 1 |
| Gratton Road | ... | 2 | — | 2 |
| Muswell Road | ... | 21 | 11 | 32 |
| Offa Road | ... | 22 | 7 | 29 |
| Pembroke Street | ... | 1 | — | 1 |
| Trevor Street | ... | 6 | 3 | 9 |
| Westbourne Road | ... | 1 | — | 1 |
| Total | ... | 149 | 72 | 221 |

The houses were structurally sound, most of them being built some 60–70 years ago.

Informal notices to remedy defects were served upon the owners.

In addition as no action was taken in 4 cases outstanding from the previous year it was necessary to serve statutory notices.

At 1 house the Authority carried out the repairs on a notice served in 1952 at a total cost of £50 6s. 2d., which cost is being recovered by the Borough Treasurer. 155 informal notices were complied with, this including 127 notices from previous years. The 4 statutory notices served and 1 statutory notice outstanding for 1952 were also complied with.

Two hundred and two notices are still outstanding, but in most cases orders have been given for the work to be carried out.

(ii) Housing Act, 1936. Section 11

A list of houses which could be regarded as unfit was submitted to the Public Health Committee at its February meeting and after inspection

the Committee agreed that representation be made by the Medical Officer of Health in the 24 cases as follows:—

| <i>Situation</i> | <i>No.</i> |
|---|------------|
| Allhallows Lane (No. 18) | 1 |
| Balsall Street East (Nos. 1, 2, 4-8) | 7 |
| Hassett Street (Nos. 1-9) | 5 |
| Tavistock Place (Nos. 26-31) | 6 |
| ThurLOW Street (Nos. 2-10) | 5 |
| | — |
| Total | 24 |
| | == |

but no action to be taken for the time being in respect to the under-mentioned:—

| <i>Situation</i> | <i>No.</i> |
|---|------------|
| Tavistock Place (Nos. 41-47) | 7 |
| Union Street (Nos. 43, 45 and 47) | 3 |
| Tavistock Street (Nos. 84-90) | 4 |
| Greenhill Street (Nos. 22-30) | 5 |
| Dane Street (Nos. 4-22) | 10 |
| Cricket Lane (Nos. 22, 24) | 2 |
| Thatched Cottage, Clapham Road (Nos. 3, 4) | 2 |

The Medical Officer also submitted a representation on No. 12, St. Cuthbert's Street. The house was closed and an undertaking was given by the owners early in 1954 that the house would not be used for human habitation but as a trade store. The tenants were rehoused.

Demolition Orders were served in respect of the houses in Balsall Street East and Tavistock Place, including No. 3, Balsall Street East which was in a sound condition but formed part of the block. The tenants were rehoused by the Housing Department and the demolition of the property should be completed in 1954.

The making of Demolition Orders on Allhallows Lane and ThurLOW Street houses has been deferred pending re-development of the area. Demolition Orders were not made on the houses in Hassett Street; but on instruction of the Estates Committee these have been purchased and minor repairs have been carried out and the property will be kept in a weather-proof condition until their demolition is required in proposed re-development schemes. Nos. 4-22, Dane Street have also been purchased by the Committee, and action has been taken to render them weather-proof pending rehousing of the occupants.

Three houses, Nos. 494 and 496 Goldington Road and No. 1 Bury Walk, are still occupied under licences granted by the Ministry of Health. On inspection of these houses it has been found that they are being maintained in a fair state of repair.

(iii) Bungalows erected by Ministry of Works

Further to my comments in the 1952 Report on these dwellings erected in 1942, a detailed inspection was made of the 100 premises situated in the Miller Road and Mile Road areas to investigate the extent

of cases of dampness, of which many complaints had been received. This inspection revealed the following:—

| <i>Miller Close area</i> | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|
| <i>Condition</i> | | | | | | <i>No.</i> |
| Satisfactory | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9 |
| Fair | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 6 |
| Unsatisfactory | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5 |
| Total | | | | | | 20 |

| <i>Mile Road area (Millfield Estate)</i> | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|
| <i>Condition</i> | | | | | | <i>No.</i> |
| Satisfactory | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 18 |
| Fair | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 44 |
| Unsatisfactory | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 18 |
| Total | | | | | | 80 |

The houses are pre-fabricated temporary buildings of poor construction and cannot be considered as ideal dwellings. A report was submitted to the Public Health Committee in June, 1953, and it was resolved that the dwellings be inspected by the Committee in the late Autumn in order to determine what action should be taken, and an inspection was subsequently made. At the November meeting the owners and agents were interviewed, and in the case of the Miller Close Estate the owners stated that they were prepared to demolish all the bungalows. The Committee, however, decided that the four worst ones should be demolished immediately, and the remainder should be demolished within a period not exceeding two years. The four houses concerned were demolished early in 1954, the tenants being re-housed.

Regarding the Millfield Estate the representative of the owners attended the inspection and the meeting of the Committee. He stated that if the bungalows could be cleared away he would then erect houses on the sites. The Committee decided, however, that the tenants of the bungalows be re-housed, the bungalows being demolished as and when houses are available and the Authority to acquire the land, for which negotiations are still in progress, for erection of Council Houses.

(iv) Public Health Act, 1936

Where minor defects or nuisances are found to exist, such as defective drainage or absence of dustbins, action is taken under this Act. In 2 instances it was found necessary to serve statutory notices, these being complied with by the owners. During the year 105 complaints were received at this office and all were investigated and necessary action taken to abate nuisances discovered.

For some time complaints of offensive smells were received from residents in High Street, and following detailed joint investigation with officials of the Borough Engineer's Department over a period of time, the conclusion was reached that the smells were possibly due to coal gas.

The attention of the Eastern Gas Board was called to this matter and a check was made on the gas mains and service pipes in the neighbourhood, but no escape of gas was recorded at that time. In view of repeated complaints further tests were applied and a leakage of coal gas was discovered. On the defects being remedied no further complaints were received.

At about the same time smells similar to coal gas were perceived at the Day Nursery in St. John's Street. Again, after lengthy joint investigations with officials of the County Architect's Department, coal gas was assumed to be the cause. On tests being applied by officials of the Gas Board defects were discovered and subsequently remedied.

Similar complaints were also received from occupants of houses in Canning Street which again were traced to coal gas and the defects were subsequently remedied.

In connection with the complaints a considerable amount of time has been expended on investigations, and anxiety existed until the causes of the offensive smells were finally determined. It is hoped, however, that now the Gas Board has new apparatus for detecting gas leakages such leakages will be quickly discovered.

(v) Observations

Constant supervision of all work specified under both the Housing and Public Health Acts is undertaken by the Inspectors of the Department. On account of the householders not being at home, very often because of their being out at work, repeat visits have had to be made in a number of cases for house inspection purposes.

Although owners place orders for work to be undertaken there is a considerable amount of delay in getting specified works carried out owing to the skilled labour not being available, such labour being absorbed in the erection of houses and on public works in the country generally.

Cost of repairs is still very high and in view of low statutory rents in some cases owners finding difficulty in meeting such costs, it has been necessary in a few instances to extend the period for carrying out repairs.

There is very little property in Bedford which can be termed "Unfit", there being some 450 houses previously mentioned which might be considered in this class plus 96 bungalows, but there are some 1,400 houses which may be regarded as of low standard which are not regarded as definitely unfit. Many of these houses are situated in proposed re-development areas, but to complete such a programme will take several years, and until houses are available it will not be possible to make a clearance drive of low standard property, but progress is steadily being made. Some of the proposals as outlined in the Housing Repair and Rents Bill have for some time been the policy of this Department.

On the 8th and 9th January, 1954, in company with the Chairman and some members of the Public Health Committee, together with Chief Officers, I attended a Conference arranged by the Association of Municipal Corporations on Housing and Slum Clearance, when papers relating to slum clearance, re-housing and the Housing (Repairs and Rent) Bill were submitted and proved of great interest.

(B) GENERAL

(i) Overcrowding

The following table shows the position with regard to overcrowding as at 31st December, 1953.

| | | | |
|--|-----|-----|----|
| Overcrowding cases outstanding at December, 1952 | ... | ... | 4 |
| New cases discovered during 1953 | ... | ... | 11 |
| Total | | | 15 |
| Number of cases abated during 1953 | ... | ... | 9 |
| Number of cases outstanding at 31st December, 1953 | | | 6 |

Overcrowding discovered in 1953 was caused as follows:—

| | | | |
|--|-----|-----|---|
| Taking in sub-tenants or lodgers | ... | ... | 8 |
| By the tenant and family exceeding the permitted number of persons allowed to occupy the house | ... | ... | 3 |

During the year a few applications were received from landlords and agents to supply the permitted number of persons who may occupy individual houses.

(ii) Purchase of Property

In accordance with instructions of the Authority the policy of purchasing houses of low standard, mainly in proposed central re-development areas, has been undertaken by the Department, and during the year 67 such houses were purchased, all by private treaty, making a total of 202 bought during the past few years. Owing to high prices still prevailing no houses were purchased at public auctions.

It is pleasing to note that a number of tenants have purchased the houses they occupy with a resultant improvement in the property generally.

(iii) Housing Amenities

(a) Baths

It is now estimated that there are 4,500 houses without baths, and it may be stated that in any case at approximately 2,000 houses the provision of a bath cannot be expected because of their poor type, and in most cases they are situated in re-development areas.

In the remaining cases it is hoped that provision of a bath will eventually be made and under the provision of the Housing Act, 1949 (Part 2) it is possible to obtain financial assistance for this purpose.

(b) Water Supply

There is no change under this heading.

(c) Houses without Secondary Means of Access

It is estimated that there are 116 houses to which access from the street to the yard or garden can be made only by the front door, thus fuel

and household refuse has to be carried through the house. The majority of these houses are situated in re-development areas and should eventually be demolished.

(d) *Closet Accommodation*

With the exception of 14 houses every house in the Borough has separate closet accommodation. All water closets have flushing cisterns.

It is estimated that 486 houses, including 45 almshouses, have W.Cs. situated at the bottom of the garden or yard. W.Cs. in this situation are not ideal, especially at houses where aged persons reside.

During the year 8 W.Cs. situated in barns were made into separate compartments, so as to ensure complete privacy.

2. Drainage and Sewerage

(A) DRAINAGE

Drain testing on payment of a fee of 15s. was undertaken at four houses.

Work of repair of drains to 12 houses was carried out on the instructions of this Department by arrangement with the various owners, the cost being recovered from them.

New drains have been laid at the bungalow at 198, Kimbolton Road, Bedford, on advice given by this Department, and connection made to the public sewer.

At the Angler's Rest Public House, Clapham Road, Bedford, pail closets were replaced with water closets connected to a cesspool.

During the year several complaints were received of flooding after heavy rain at the houses in Beauchamp Row, and as much flooding has occurred in the past on similar occasions the matter was referred to the Borough Engineer for his attention as the question involved the possible insufficient capacity of the sewer.

(B) PREMISES NOT CONNECTED TO THE PUBLIC SEWER

There are 39 houses and 7 factories not connected to the public sewer, on which details were given in the report for 1952.

3. Sanitary Dustbins

Following upon the coming into force of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1953, some 20 Local Authorities were circularised concerning the procedure adopted by them in the provision of dustbins. Following upon information received, and the opportunity given for appeal, the Public Health Committee adopted the following:—

(a) That informal notices requiring the provision of dustbins be served in the first instance upon the owner of the property concerned, except in cases when renewal is necessary because of misuse by the occupier or where there is a contractual agreement for the occupier to supply.

(b) That if the owner fails to supply full details of the case be submitted to the Committee for consideration.

4. Inspection of Premises (other than Houses) **Public Health Act, 1936**

(A) OFFICES

It is estimated that there are at least 300 offices in the Borough, and it can be said that generally these premises were satisfactory, there being very few of the semi-basement type.

(B) PUBLIC HOUSES

Improvements continued to be made at public houses during the year and at 6 premises extensive works of structural alteration were made, whereby the sanitary accommodation is now provided within the building, while at 5 minor improvements were made. At 3 similar works are still in progress. It may be stated that the works of structural improvement have considerably added to the amenities of the premises.

There is, however, work of improvement to be carried out at a number of public houses, and it is hoped that some of this will be completed in 1954.

In connection with Town Planning the matter of the closure and re-siting of some of the public houses in the central area is still under consideration.

One house, the "Six Bells" in Cauldwell Street, was voluntarily closed during the year.

(C) HOTELS, BOARDING HOUSES AND HOSTELS

In the Borough there are 11 hotels, 8 of which are licensed for the sale of alcoholic drinks. In addition there are 32 boarding houses in connection with public and private schools, as well as a number of privately owned boarding houses, and a few hostels.

When visited these premises have been found in good condition.

(D) CINEMAS, THEATRE AND DANCE HALLS

There are four cinemas in the town licensed by the Bedfordshire County Council, and one theatre licensed by the Borough Council.

All the cinemas were kept in a satisfactory condition, and at one plans for additional sanitary accommodation and structural alterations have been submitted, but in view of possible road widening suggested works are not being proceeded with pending completion of negotiations for the purchase of a small portion of the premises.

With regard to the theatre a building licence for carrying out a portion of the works of suggested improvement to the premises has been granted to operate as from the 1st March, 1954. The Local Authority gave its support when the application for a licence was made.

Visits were made to the public and other halls used for dancing and other entertainments, and these were found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

(E) RIVERS, STREAMS AND PONDS

No complaint of pollution of the River Great Ouse which passes through the town centre, was received by this Department.

Dumping of old iron and discarded household articles still continues in the King's Ditch, which has to be cleaned from time to time by the Borough Engineer's Department.

Another stream, from Elstow Road to Cardington Road, is at times a source of nuisance, which may be due to trade waste and the possible cause is being investigated.

(F) PLACES WHERE ANIMALS ARE KEPT

There are several piggeries situated on the outskirts of the town, and at two of these complaints were received of offensive smell. Upon investigation the complaints were found to be justified, and following upon instructions to the owner no further complaints have arisen.

(G) SMOKE ABATEMENT

There are 35 chimneys at 25 factories, but all are not in frequent use. In addition there are 2 chimneys used at the two Wings of the Bedford General Hospital.

Following upon observations made emission of black smoke beyond the permitted two minutes in any period of thirty minutes was observed on 12 occasions involving 6 factories. Upon investigation it would appear that the cause of the contraventions was due chiefly to the use of inferior fuel.

At one factory situated in the centre of the town, which had been a cause of nuisance, a mechanical stoker was installed with the result that the emission of smoke has been diminished but complaints of grit have since been received from residents of nearby houses. The management has been interviewed and the question of installing a grit arrester is now under consideration.

Heavy deposition of grit was noticed on several occasions within the vicinity of the Town Hall. The management of a nearby factory was interviewed and it was subsequently found that this excessive emission was due to poor stoking. An improvement was made in methods of stoking and for some time no heavy emission has been noted.

It may be stated that the smoke problem from factories is not serious but air pollution caused by the emission of smoke from private dwellings during the winter months is on the increase, due in the main to the poor quality of fuel available. The remedy would appear to be the replacement of old-type firegrates with modern types and the use of smokeless fuel.

In accordance with a request received from the National Smoke Abatement Society a copy of the booklet "Industrial Smoke Prevention and National Fuel Policy" was sent to each industrial undertaking which used solid fuel fired boilers in their concerns. In addition copies of this booklet and also one on "Domestic Smoke Prevention and National Fuel Policy" were sent to the Public Library so that members of the public could have the opportunity of reading them.

5. Food and Drugs Act, 1938

(1) FOOD PREMISES

The following schedule shows the number of food premises in Bedford together with their classification by type of business.

| <i>Trade</i> | <i>Number in Main Trades</i> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Bakehouses | 14 |
| Banana Merchants | 2 |
| Biscuit Depots | 1 |
| Brewery and Soft Drink Manufacturers | 3 |
| Butchers | 51 |
| Cafes | 38 |
| Canteens | 34 |
| Chemists | 20 |
| Confectioners (Flour) | 18 |
| Confectioners (Sugar) | 36 |
| Cornddealers and Flour | 9 |
| Clubs | 15 |
| Dairies | 16 |
| Fish Fryers | 17 |
| Fishmongers—Retail | 12 |
| —Wholesale | 1 |
| Flour Mills | 1 |
| Food Storage Depots | 3 |
| Fruiterers and Greengrocers | 55 |
| Grain Silo | 1 |
| Grocery and Provisions | 168 |
| Hotels (Licensed) | 5 |
| Public Houses | 96 |
| Slaughterhouses | 3 |
| Sweet and Chocolate Manufacturers | 3 |
| Off Licences—Alcoholic | 11 |
| Total | <u>633</u> |

In addition there are 40 food stalls on the market square, as under:—

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Confectionery | 5 |
| Fish | 4 |
| Cafe | 1 |
| Fruit and Vegetables | 30 |

The following table shows the number of premises registered under Section 14 of the Act.

| | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| Manufacture of Ice Cream | ... | ... | 5 |
| Storage and/or Sale of Ice Cream | ... | ... | 144 |
| *Preparation or manufacture of sausage, or potted, pressed, pickled or preserved food | | | 54 |

* Includes 18 fish-frying premises.

During the year a total of 442 visits were made to the food premises mentioned.

Twelve registrations for the sale and storage of Ice Cream (pre-packed) were granted during the year.

It may be generally stated that the food premises (manufacture, storage and sale) are being maintained in a satisfactory condition but contraventions were noted at 28 premises and these contraventions were remedied.

During the year the following changes occurred:

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|---|
| <i>Premises closed</i> | | | | |
| Cafes | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| <i>Premises opened</i> | | | | |
| Cafe | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Grocer | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| Butcher | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Fruiterer | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Fish and Fish Frying | | | ... | 1 |
| Sweets | ... | ... | ... | 1 |

With regard to slaughterhouses, the Committee considered the renewal of these in December and resolved as under:—

(a) To renew the licences of the 2 premises privately owned and requisitioned by the Ministry of Food.

(b) To defer renewal of 7 privately owned premises infrequently used, in order that they may be brought up to a minimum standard of fitness in the meantime.

(c) To defer certain works of alteration at the Boswell Place premises (owned by the Corporation) and under requisition by the Ministry of Food.

The Authority decided on this course of action pending the receipt of the policy of the Government on the future of slaughtering.

The matter of risk of contamination of food on stalls at open air markets receives constant attention, and while the present site cannot be regarded as ideal stallholders as far as possible take reasonable steps to avoid contamination. To avoid any undue risk the provision of a covered-in market would be essential, and this I have repeatedly advised.

2. FOOD HYGIENE

No lectures for food handlers were held during the year but every opportunity is taken to ensure hygiene by giving advice when visiting food premises, particularly in the case of cafes, restaurants and canteens.

Interest is still being shown by the management of food premises as to the provision of the byelaws relating to Handling, Wrapping and Delivery of Food, and requests are still received for posters giving essential requirements of the byelaws for display to food handlers.

On inspection it was noted that the request that dogs be not admitted to food premises was being well observed, but it is noticed that in a few instances cats are kept at such premises.

III. SHOPS ACTS, 1950—SECTION 38

The Public Health Department is responsible for the above section of the Act which deals with the health and comfort of shop workers, and in the Borough there are 1,027 shops concerned.

Upon inspection at 7 shops the sanitary accommodation was found to be unsatisfactory, and following upon informal notices was subsequently rectified.

During the year six shops were built by the Corporation on the Mile Road Housing Estate, and consideration is being given to the provision of shops on the Putnoe Housing Estate and in Cardington Road (private development).

IV. PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS WHICH CAN BE CONTROLLED BY BYELAWS AND REGULATIONS

1. Houses Let in Lodgings

Principally north of the river are a number of large houses which are occupied as Houses let in Lodgings, i.e. where there are two or more families renting and occupying rooms which are not self-contained flats, and the number is steadily increasing by the occupation of houses by persons other than British subjects. Some difficulty arises in ascertaining the situation of such houses and information generally is only received from the official sources. During the year 34 houses had been occupied as such, and on investigation it was found that many of the persons preferred to live with some person of their own race and with members of their own families instead of being in hostels near places of work. Most of these persons are employed at brickworks in the neighbourhood of Bedford. Investigations are complicated by the variety of languages and also by the fact that foreign workers are usually at work when the Inspector calls, this causing repeat visits before any successful enquiries are made. Rents charged for accommodation appear to be very high and the owners of these properties are receiving a high financial return.

The premises generally were found to be clean but a certain amount of overcrowding on the standards of the Housing Act, 1936, existed, and the occupiers were called upon to abate this. Many of the buildings consist of three or more storeys, and no provision has been made in the case of the upper rooms for means of escape in the case of fire, and as this would appear to contravene Section 60 of the Public Health Act, 1936, the attention of the Borough Surveyor has been drawn to the matter.

It may be stated that some resentment has arisen whereby owners of property in these residential areas fear that their property will depreciate in value, and again complaint has been made of noise caused by racial excitement of such people and the playing of portable musical instruments (piano accordions, etc.)

Rooms in Houses let in Lodgings cannot be regarded as satisfactory, especially in the case of children of families who occupy the upper floors. This very often means that babies for the most part are kept indoors, while the older children do not have the free use of the gardens. Further, the arrangements for cooking and washing are not ideal but are the best that can be secured under the present Byelaws.

In view of modern housing trends large houses are very difficult to let and there are always some for sale. In some instances the Authority has bought houses of this type and converted them into flats but cannot do this as a general policy. It is a great pity that owners of such houses do not take advantage of the possibility of financial aid being obtained under the Housing Act, 1949, whereby such properties could be converted into self-contained flats.

2. Common Lodging Houses

The following table shows the accommodation available and the number of lodgers who used this accommodation during the past year. Males only are accommodated.

| Situation | No. of Bedrooms | No. of beds | No. of lodgers admitted |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| 22 Allhallows Lane | 2 | 16 | 4,536 |
| 8a Tavistock Place | 6 | 40 | 11,873 |
| Totals ... | 8 | 56 | 16,409 |

The figures for the above-mentioned Common Lodging Houses show a decrease of 1,205 over those of the previous year.

The premises have been found to be maintained in a satisfactory condition.

3. Movable Dwellings

(A) AT FAIRGROUNDS AND CIRCUSES

Caravans used by the showmen attending the Statute Fairs in Commercial Road and Goldington Green, and fairs and a circus in Cardington Road were inspected and found to be maintained in a very cleanly condition.

No illness was reported.

(B) PRIVATE SITES

Licences were granted to the occupiers of caravans on the following sites:—

| <i>Site</i> | <i>No. of caravans</i> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 9, The Green, Goldington | 1 |
| Paddock, 1, Goldington Green ... | 4 |
| The Bury, Goldington Green ... | 1 |
| The Swan, Goldington Road ... | 2 |
| Anchor Yard, Goldington Road ... | 1 |
| Welford Gravels, Barkers Lane ... | 1 |
| Goldington Hall, Goldington Road ... | 1 |
| Total | 11 |

One caravan situated at the Clarence Yard, St. John's Street, Bedford, was removed early in the year, as was also a caravan situated at Park Farm, Bury Walk.

The caravans are occupied by adults only, except in two instances where there is one child in each case.

Sanitary accommodation is either available at a house on the site, or by the caravan dwellers themselves providing chemical closets. Water is in all cases obtained from houses on the sites.

From time to time visits have been made to this type of dwelling and they have been found to be satisfactory. It may be added, however, that they cannot be considered ideal as permanent dwellings, especially where there are children, and as soon as houses become available it should not then be necessary to issue licences.

(C) CHALETS

Visits were also made during the year to the nine riverside chalets off Cardington Road, which are occupied during the summer months and these were found to be satisfactory.

(D) INDUSTRIAL SITES

Inspections have been made to the temporary huts on the site of the new Power Station, Barkers Lane. These are occupied by workmen only and are kept in a satisfactory condition. There is ample sanitary accommodation and water supply.

The occupants obtain their meals at the work's canteen nearby.

V. PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

The following table shows the number and type of premises inspected and treated.

| | Type of Property | | | | |
|--|------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|---|-------|
| | Local Authority | Dwelling houses | Agri-cultural | All other (including Business and Industrial) | Total |
| Number of properties inspected | | | | | |
| (a) on complaint ... | 11 | 241 | — | 82 | 334 |
| (b) on survey ... | 4 | 471 | 1 | 269 | 745 |
| Number of properties found to be infested with rats | | | | | |
| (a) Major ... | — | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| (b) Minor ... | 8 | 131 | — | 44 | 183 |
| Number of properties found to be infested with mice ... | 3 | 109 | — | 38 | 150 |
| Number of infested properties treated by Local Authority ... | 11 | 241 | — | 82 | 334 |
| Number of inspections ... | 15 | 712 | 1 | 351 | 1,079 |
| Visits for treatment ... | 21 | 738 | — | 170 | 929 |
| Number of "block" control schemes carried out ... | 49 | (459 premises, business and private) | | | |

As will be seen from the table there is no serious infestation by rats or mice, but infestation still exists in the central area and a constant watch is kept on the district. It was decided to take further action in this area early in 1954.

Fifty-nine contracts were entered into during the year and the sum of £62 18s. 0d. was collected by the Borough Treasurer in respect of contracts.

In December the Committee considered the cost of this service, and in view of the fact that the present charge of 6s. per hour per man for business premises did not cover the cost of materials, labour, etc., it was decided that as from 1st January, 1954 the charge should be 7s. per hour. No charge is made for work undertaken at private dwellings.

The work of eradication of rats and mice is regarded as being of great importance, as much damage to foodstuffs and property as well as the

possible spread of disease, is prevented. The service is not a paying proposition, however, but in view of the comments made above the expenses incurred are more than compensated for by the results achieved. As usual, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries made a grant for the service provided.

The work of eradication of rats in the public sewers was continued by the staff of the Borough Engineer and Surveyor and this, no doubt, has helped to prevent infestation of property. In view of departmental re-organisation, and by arrangement with the Borough Engineer and with the consent of the Committees concerned, it was agreed that the work be transferred to this Department, as it was considered that such work should be undertaken in conjunction with the treatment of properties. This scheme operated from the 1st January, 1954.

In view of illness from April and subsequent retirement in October of one of the general assistants (manual work) it was necessary to curtail the work of survey as the then Rodent Operator had to undertake some of the duties normally undertaken by the man off sick.

Following upon the employment of another man on the 19th October it was decided to re-organise the work of the manual workers of the Department so that all three men undertake similar duties in three separate districts, this work including rodent control on a part-time basis. This scheme ensures the whole of the Borough being satisfactorily covered for the duties required.

The two men undertaking rodent control duties, who had not previously attended any course, received a three-day course of practical training held in Bedford by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

In order to bring to the notice of the public the services offered by the Authority in connection with rodent control, and the obligations laid down in the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, a portable display unit, loaned by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, was installed in the foyer of the Public Library during the week commencing 10th August, 1953. This proved of great interest. Leaflets were also made available to persons interested.

VI. NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948

1. Section 47—Care and Attention of Aged Persons

This section provides for the necessary care and attention of persons who

(a) are suffering from grave chronic disease or, being aged and infirm or physically incapacitated, are living in insanitary conditions, and

(b) are unable to devote themselves, and are not receiving from other persons, proper care and attention.

In two cases, acting on the instructions of the Committee, application was made to the Magistrates for the removal to hospital of two persons as under.

| No. of case | Sex | Age | Conditions found on inspection | Remarks |
|-------------|-----|-----|--|---|
| 1 | F | 60 | Spinster living in bed-sitting room. In poor state of health and of low mentality. Not receiving proper care and attention | Application made in May, 1954. Renewals of application made in April and October, these being granted |
| 2 | F | 84 | Widow, living alone. Crippled and unable to walk. Not able to control natural needs | Ditto |

An elderly widow who was removed to hospital in 1951 on a Magistrate's Order is still in hospital on a voluntary basis.

Eight other cases were investigated during the year as follows:—

| No. of case | Age | Sex | Conditions found on inspection | Action taken | Remarks |
|-------------|----------|--------|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| 3 | 86 | M | Lodger. Room in dirty condition ... | Refused hospital admission. Died within 24 hours of investigation | |
| 4 | 58 | M | One room occupied by man who was owner of house | Arrangements made with Home Help Service for cleansing | Person being kept under observation |
| 5 | 76 72 | M F | House occupied by aged brother and sister. Rooms in untidy condition | Arrangements made with Home Help Service for cleansing | Persons being kept under observation |
| 6 | 56 | F | Living alone. House in fair condition. Woman in poor health and low mentality | | Person being kept under observation |
| 7 | 80 80 | M F | Living in small two-roomed house. House in fair condition. Both in poor state of health | Refused hospital admission ... | Being kept under observation |
| 8 | 72 | F | Premises in fair condition. Lodgers being taken in | | Person being kept under observation |
| 9 | 70 | F | Living alone. Found to be ill ... | Removed to hospital. Since been discharged | Being kept under observation |

Regarding case No. 4 in 1952 report, the woman was taken ill and removed to hospital where she died in January, 1954. Case No. 6 reported in my report of 1952; this woman was removed to hospital during the latter part of the year.

The care and attention of elderly persons is still a problem and very often it is too late to do anything to help because of the delay in discovery of the circumstances, cases only being brought to notice when dire circumstances arise.

It is understood that a local society is giving consideration to possible ways and means of ascertaining of any cases that may exist in the town, and should any cases come to the knowledge of this Department every possible help will be given.

Good work is being done by the Home Help Service in cleaning up the homes for aged persons. Health Visitors and District Nurses have also given valuable assistance.

2. Section 50—Burial or Cremation of the Dead

Three bodies of persons were buried under the above named Section of the Act, as no suitable arrangements were made by relatives or friends, at a total cost of £36 12s. 6d.

A sum of £20 15s. 6d. was recovered by the Borough Treasurer from the estates of the deceased towards the cost of the funerals.

In conjunction with an official of the Borough Treasurer's Department, enquiries are made by this Department in each case in order to ascertain if deceased persons have any assets, so that the cost of funerals may be recovered, if possible.

Three tenders were received for the annual contract of burial of deceased persons, the lowest tender being accepted, a quotation exactly the same as the previous year being made.

VII. RENT RESTRICTION ACTS, 1920-1946

1. Unfurnished and Furnished Accommodation

No complaints were received by the Authority during the year relating to unfurnished rooms or houses, but notification was received from the local Rent Tribunal that 5 cases had been heard, and that rent reduction had been made in each of these.

2. General

Owners, tenants, sub-tenants and lodgers have visited the office on many occasions seeking information concerning eviction and rent charges. In respect of furnished accommodation many tenants are being evicted on High Court Order and this makes a heavy demand on housing accommodation provided by the Authority.

On inspection of rent books it has been found that very often the legal particulars required are not entered, and attention has been drawn to this.

There were no applications for a certificate by the sanitary authority as to the state of repair of a dwelling house.

Owners of many low rented houses are still suffering hardship when repairs are required, this being due to the high costs involved. The remedy, which I have advocated for a number of years, is to allow the rent to be raised on a reasonable basis above the 40% allowed for repairs, etc., on condition that the homes are maintained in good order. The Housing (Repairs and Rents) Bill now before Parliament, on becoming law, may assist owners financially in house repairs.

VIII. FACTORIES ACT, 1937

1. Inspections

The following tables show the number of factories on the register, the number of inspections made and the number of defects discovered and the results of action taken.

1. INSPECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISIONS AS TO HEALTH

| Premises | Number on Register | Number of inspections | Number of written notices | Number of occupiers prosecuted |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities | 66 | 20 | 1 | — |
| *(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority | 322 | 134 | 4 | — |
| (iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises) ... | 29 | 44 | 1 | — |
| Total ... | 417 | 198 | 6 | — |

* Many of these are small factories where only a few persons are employed.

CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

| Particulars | Number of cases in which defects were found | | | | Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted |
|--|---|----------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| | Found | Remedied | Referred to H.M. Inspector | Referred by H.M. Inspector | |
| Want of cleanliness | 4 | 3 | — | — | — |
| Overcrowding | — | — | — | — | — |
| Unreasonable temperature | — | — | — | — | — |
| Inadequate ventilation | — | — | — | — | — |
| Ineffective drainage of floors | — | — | — | — | — |
| Sanitary Conveniences— | | | | | |
| (a) Insufficient | 2 | 1 (1) | — | — | — |
| (b) Unsuitable or defective | 9 | 8 (5) | — | — | — |
| (c) Not separate for sexes | — | — | — | — | — |
| Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork) | 4 | 2 | 1 | — | — |
| Total ... | 19 | 14 (6) | 1 | — | — |

*Note:—*Figures in brackets denote work outstanding from previous years; these are included in unbracketed figures.

2. Outwork

The following shows the number of outworkers on the register:—

| <i>Nature of Work</i> | | | <i>No. of Outworkers</i> |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|------------------------------|
| Wearing apparel (making, etc.) | ... | ... | 35 |
| Household linen | ... | ... | 13 |
| Curtains and furniture hangings | ... | ... | 2 |
| Furniture and upholstery | ... | ... | 3 |
| Total | | | <u>53</u> |

Visits of inspection were made and the premises were found to be in a satisfactory condition.

IX. DISINFECTION AND DISINFESTATION

1. Disinfection

Steam disinfection of quantities of bedding, clothing, etc., was undertaken for bedding firms and national and local authorities and undertakings, for which charges were made to cover expenses. A sum of £6 7s. 6d. was received in this connection plus £5 2s. 6d. for collection and delivery.

2. Disinfestation

The work of destroying insect pests of all types is carried out by this Department, and no charge is made for this service. The general method is by the spraying of liquid insecticides, or powder, containing D.D.T. and other chemicals. The results of treatment were satisfactory in all cases. There were no serious infestations.

The following table shows the number of infested premises treated, together with the types of infestation.

| Premises | Nature of Vermin | Number of Premises |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Houses—Council | Bugs | 8 |
| | Ants | 14 |
| | Wasps | 3 |
| | Beetles, etc. | 7 |
| Houses—Privately owned | Bugs | 11 |
| | Ants | 19 |
| | Wasps | 5 |
| | Beetles, etc. | 7 |
| Business premises | Bugs | 1 |
| | Ants | 3 |
| | Wasps | 1 |
| | Beetles, etc. | 8 |
| Total | | 87 |

At five houses, in addition to the above, it was found necessary on inspection to remove and destroy filthy bedding and clothing. At three other houses the bedding was removed for steam disinfestation.

X. MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, 1926

Many visits are made to shops and market stalls under this Act to see that the legal requirements with regard to labelling of certain imported commodities are complied with, and in 18 instances contraventions were recorded, and on attention being drawn to the failure to comply with such requirements steps were immediately taken by the shopkeepers and stallholders to remedy omissions made.

Leaflets giving details of the Orders made under the Act are distributed from time to time and are also available on request for those requiring them.

So far it has not been possible to obtain the services of an "expert" to give opinion on the origin of tomatoes. A number of authorities do rely on the admission of the trader concerning the origin of tomatoes and failure to label when taking proceedings.

XI. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Industrial Premises

(a) Dust and Fumes

Referring to the 1952 Report further complaints of dust and fumes from a fertilizer factory were received from nearby residents. Investigations were made and the complaints were found to be justified. The management stated that at the request of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries day and night work was being carried on, owing to an emergency, and the plant was being kept working at full capacity. On visiting with the District Inspector under the Alkali Works Regulations Act, Dr. L. E. Hockin, improvements were suggested to certain machinery, and this has since been undertaken, with the result that a marked improvement has been made. As the factory concerned is situated in a residential area the management have been advised to seek a site for the factory more remotely situated from residential areas, and negotiations are now in progress with the Town Council for a site on Corporation land on the Borough boundary.

(b) Fumes

Complaint was received in the latter part of the year to the effect that damage was being caused to external paintwork on nearby property by fumes from a local factory. Investigations were undertaken and the complaints were substantiated. Upon the attention of the management being directed to this a check was made on the plant and a defect was discovered which has now been remedied.

(c) Noises

It may be recorded that the number of complaints regarding noise are on the increase, and such complaints and their investigation involve numerous visits and much expenditure of time. At the moment there is no legal power under which the problem can be dealt with, and therefore one has to rely on the co-operation of all concerned.

During the year nearby residents complained of noise from a test bay of an engineering works. Several visits were made, both during the day and evening, and it was found that noise from the machinery when working was audible in the streets and houses. The management was interviewed and as a result structural alterations were undertaken to the building concerned and also alterations were made to the plant, this resulting in a diminution of the noise.

One other complaint was also made of noise from a factory in the town. The management concerned was interviewed and action has been taken whereby the noise has been minimised.

(d) Noise, Dust and Husks

Complaints of noise from machinery, and of dust and husks emanating from a grain silo adjoining the Hitchin Railway Line were made in the autumn by many of the occupants of adjoining houses. These complaints were duly investigated, several visits having been made, and evidence of noise was proved and there was clearly an emission of dust and husks.

The Lessees of the factory, a firm operating the plant on behalf of the Ministry of Food, were communicated with, as were also the Ministry of Works (the owners of the building and plant). To obviate noise at night and weekends work at such times was discontinued, and eventually temporary screening was affixed to the exhaust shafts which has minimised the emission of the husks but fine dust still emanates at times.

In view of renewed complaints the Ministry of Works was again communicated with and after protracted negotiations it has been decided that the erection of an expansion chamber, containing a series of internal baffle walls, on the silo roof will minimise the noise and prevent emission of dust and husks. This work, it is expected, will be completed by August, 1954.

2. General

(a) Building Plans

All plans for new buildings deposited with the Borough Engineer and Surveyor are examined by this Department to ensure that they comply with the Acts and Byelaws concerned, and any necessary amendments are made before they are submitted to the Town Planning Committee for approval.

(b) Harpur Trust Almshouses

In accordance with the request of the appropriate Committee the Housing Manager and your Chief Sanitary Inspector were empowered to prepare a short list of applicants for the Harpur Trust Almshouses from a schedule of applications. A number of visits were made to applicants, and following on such visits a selected short list of applicants was prepared and submitted to the Committee for its consideration. Opportunity was also taken at the same time of revising the list of applicants. From observations made it is a sound policy to refer applicants to the officials mentioned above as they are in a position to judge the suitability as to fitness to occupy a house.

(c) Town Planning and Re-development Schemes

In connection with the preparation of the Town Council's schemes for re-development of the central area of the town a great deal of time has been expended in assisting, in conjunction with the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, with the suggested programme, and many meetings have been attended on this matter.

(d) Educational Activities

Talks on Public Health work have been given from time to time to students from various training colleges and conducted tours of food premises have been arranged for them.